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1888



ENGLISH SONNETS.



ENGLISH SONNETS

BY

POETS OF THE PAST

EDITED BY

SAMUEL WADDINGTON

SECOND EDITION

'*Laborum dulce lenimen.*'—HOR.

LONDON: GEORGE BELL AND SONS

YORK STREET COVENT GARDEN

1888

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TO

Dante Gabriel Rossetti

THIS VOLUME IS, BY PERMISSION,

Dedicated.



Preface.

THE following selection has been prepared for publication as a companion volume to "English Sonnets by Living Writers:—"—and it is hoped that in these two anthologies, the one including the authors of the Past and the other those of the Present, the whole of our best English sonnet-literature will be found to be fairly represented. Several poets and sonneteers that have been omitted,—in a few instances somewhat strangely omitted,—from previous selections, are here, for the first time, allowed to occupy that space to which they are so justly entitled, and from which they have apparently been driven by supplanters of a lower rank. The Editor would especially call attention to the

two plaintive, yet noble, sonnets by Robert Burns (pp. 62-3): the first of which, beginning—

Sing on, sweet thrush, upon the leafless bough ;

Sing on, sweet bird, I listen to thy strain—

is surely one of the sweetest and most pathetic of all our sonnets, and certainly deserving of a place in all future sonnet-anthologies. Among other poets not included in previous selections, who are represented in the following pages, may be mentioned Robert Herrick, whose sonnets, though irregular in form, are nevertheless works of much beauty, and are written after the manner of those of his contemporary William Habington, the author of *Castara*, and one of the most productive sonneteers of that age. The reader will also find sonnets by Dean Milman ; George Eliot ; Bernard Barton, the Quaker poet ; Henry Francis Cary, the well-known translator of Dante ; William Motherwell ; Thomas Noel, the author of *The Pauper's Drive* and other poems ; John Anster ; George Morine, &c. &c. It has been deemed advisable to relegate to the Notes at the end of the volume, specimens of the work of two or three authors whose poems are of interest only in connection with the history of the Sonnet,

and are not such as would afford pleasure to ordinary modern readers. Amongst these will be found examples of the compositions of Sir Thomas Wyatt and his friend the Earl of Surrey, the earliest writers in English of this form of verse. Also the less famous of Blanco White's two sonnets will be found at page 232;—his *Night and Death* is, of course, given in the body of the book.

As those who are well acquainted with the late Rev. Alexander Dyce's pleasant Selection of sonnets will remember that he included a large number by John Bampfylde and by Miss Anna Seward, the Editor would take this opportunity of explaining that he has omitted these sonneteers advisedly, and after due consideration of their respective merits and defects. And this observation applies also to a few other minor poets such as Philip Ayres, Thomas Edwards, Walsh, Chapman, Kirke White, Beddoes, &c. &c.

A recent writer in the "Westminster Review" has pointed out that "the Sonnet is beginning to take the same place amongst us, making allowance for altered circumstances, as the Epigram did with the Greeks:"—and of both these kinds of composition it may be re-

marked, in the words of an old author, that although a little thing gives perfection, perfection is not a little thing. In both "style is put under high pressure," and perhaps no one has stated this better, or more forcibly, than the present Lord Lytton, who writes,—“It (the Sonnet) is a form of verse which most severely tests the art of the poet. It admits of no mediocrity. It must be written with the fist instead of the finger; and yet with a delicacy of manipulation of which none but the finest and most skilful finger is capable.” And to this may be added that the necessity of a lyric unity both of thought and design, which is the essential quality of the Sonnet, does not in any degree lessen the difficulty of its composition. For whether it be made to consist of three parts, like the three propositions of a syllogism,—or be divided into two sections after the manner of the Italian writers,—or be composed in the image (to use Wordsworth’s phrase) of an orbicular body—a sphere, or a dew-drop,—in all cases one idea, one thought, one mood, must pervade and govern the whole, and must endow it with life and individuality. Perhaps it is mainly in this quality of oneness, and in the necessity of being concise in so limited a space,

that an answer will be found to the question so often asked, What is the especial merit of "this curiously favourite and fortunate form of verse?" But, indeed, no answer is necessary when one meets with such a charming example of the form as the following sonnet, addressed by a living sonneteer to Wordsworth, which should have been included in our previous volume :—

' So long as Duddon 'twixt his cloud-girt walls
Thridding the woody chambers of the hills
Warbles from vaulted grot and pebbled halls
Farewell or welcome to the meadow rills ;
So long as linnets chant low madrigals
Near that brown nook the labourer whistling tills,
Or the late-reddening apple forms and falls
Mid dewy brakes the autumnal redbreast thrills,—
So long, last poet of the great old race,
Shall thy broad song through England's bosom roll,
A river singing anthems in its place,
And be to later England as a soul.
Glory to Him who made thee, and increase
To them that hear thy word, of love and peace !'

The Editor begs to thank once more the owners of the copyright of the sonnets published during recent years, for kindly allowing him to include them in his selection.

47, CONNAUGHT STREET,
HYDE PARK, W.
August, 1881.



CONTENTS.

PREFACE.	PAGE
1. Easter Morning <i>Edmund Spenser</i>	1
2. Willing Bondage <i>Edmund Spenser</i>	2
3. True Beauty <i>Edmund Spenser</i>	3
4. Like as a ship that through the ocean wide <i>Edmund Spenser</i>	4
5. With how sad steps, O moon, thou climb'st the skies. <i>Sir Philip Sidney</i>	5
6. Having this day my horse, my hand, my lance. . . <i>Sir Philip Sidney</i>	6
7. Since Nature's works be good, and death doth serve. <i>Sir Philip Sidney</i>	7
8. A Vision upon the Faery Queen <i>Sir Walter Raleigh</i>	8
9. The Constancy of Love . . . <i>Joshua Sylvester</i>	9
10. Favour <i>Henry Constable</i>	10
11. Pity refusing my poor love to feed <i>Henry Constable</i>	11
12. The Last Chance <i>Michael Drayton</i>	12
13. To the River Ankor <i>Michael Drayton</i>	13
14. To Sleep <i>Samuel Daniel</i>	14

	PAGE
15. Remembrance	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 15
16. Sunshine and Cloud	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 16
17. The True and the False	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 17
18. The World's Way	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 18
19. Life's Autumn	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 19
20. The Triumph of Death	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 20
21. The Garden of Love	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 21
22. The forward Violet thus did I chide	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 22
23. Hope against Hope	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 23
24. The Beauty of Beauties	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 24
25. True Love	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 25
26. A Picture	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 26
27. Soul and Body	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 27
28. Content	<i>Barnabe Barnes</i> 28
29. The Talent	<i>Barnabe Barnes</i> 29
30. To Death	<i>John Donne</i> 30
31. Mary Magdalen	<i>William Drummond</i> 31
32. Human Frailty	<i>William Drummond</i> 32
33. Sweet Spring, thou turn'st with all thy goodly train	<i>William Drummond</i> 33
34. Before a Poem of Irene	<i>William Drummond</i> 34
35. No Trust in Time	<i>William Drummond</i> 35
36. Alexis, here she stayed; among these pines	<i>William Drummond</i> 36
37. Trust not, sweet soul, those curl'd waves of gold	<i>William Drummond</i> 37
38. Down in a valley, by a forest's side	<i>William Browne</i> 38
39. A rose, as fair as ever saw the North	<i>William Browne</i> 39

CONTENTS.

xv

PAGE

40. I sing of brooks, of blossoms, birds, and bowers . . .	<i>Robert Herrick</i>	40
41. You say I love not 'cause I do not play	<i>Robert Herrick</i>	41
42. Love	<i>George Herbert</i>	42
43. Lord, with what care hast Thou begirt us round .	<i>George Herbert</i>	43
44. My God, where is that ancient heat towards Thee	<i>George Herbert</i>	44
45. On his Blindness	<i>John Milton</i>	45
46. Lady, that in the prime of earliest youth	<i>John Milton</i>	46
47. The Nightingale	<i>John Milton</i>	47
48. On the late Massacre in Piedmont	<i>John Milton</i>	48
49. Lawrence, of virtuous father virtuous son	<i>John Milton</i>	49
50. When the Assault was in- tended to the City . .	<i>John Milton</i>	50
51. On the Religious Memory of Mrs. Catherine Thom- son	<i>John Milton</i>	51
52. The Meaning of Life . .	<i>Benjamin Stillingfleet</i> . .	52
53. To Dampier	<i>Benjamin Stillingfleet</i> . .	53
54. On the Death of Richard West	<i>Thomas Gray</i>	54
55. Anniversary	<i>William Mason</i>	55
56. On Bathing	<i>Thomas Warton</i>	56
57. On Revisiting the River Lodon	<i>Thomas Warton</i>	57

	PAGE
58. On Dugdale's 'Monasticon'	<i>Thomas Warton</i> 58
59. To Mary Unwin	<i>William Cowper</i> 59
60. The River Arun	<i>Charlotte Smith</i> 60
61. The Close of Spring	<i>Charlotte Smith</i> 61
62. Sing on, sweet thrush	<i>Robert Burns</i> 62
63. On the Death of Robert Riddel	<i>Robert Burns</i> 63
64. On Parting with his Books	<i>William Roscoe</i> 64
65. Echo and Silence	<i>Sir S. Egerton Brydges</i> 65
66. Absence	<i>William Lisle Bowles</i> 66
67. Ostend	<i>William Lisle Bowles</i> 67
68. Valclusa	<i>Thomas Russell</i> 68
69. At Lemnos	<i>Thomas Russell</i> 69
70. Could then the babes from yon unsheltered cot	<i>Thomas Russell</i> 70
71. It is a beauteous evening, calm and free	<i>William Wordsworth</i> 71
72. Upon Westminster Bridge	<i>William Wordsworth</i> 72
73. England and Switzerland	<i>William Wordsworth</i> 73
74. Surprised by Joy	<i>William Wordsworth</i> 74
75. Calm is all nature as a resting wheel	<i>William Wordsworth</i> 75
76. How sweet it is when mother Fancy rocks	<i>William Wordsworth</i> 76
77. Nuns fret not at their con- vent's narrow room	<i>William Wordsworth</i> 77
78. The world is too much with us, late and soon	<i>William Wordsworth</i> 78
79. London, 1802	<i>William Wordsworth</i> 79
80. On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic	<i>William Wordsworth</i> 80

CONTENTS.

xvii

PAGE

81. A Poet!—He hath put his heart to school . . .	<i>William Wordsworth</i> . . .	81
82. I watch, and long have watched, with calm regret	<i>William Wordsworth</i> . . .	82
83. I thought of thee, my part- ner and my guide . .	<i>William Wordsworth</i> . . .	83
84. November, 1806	<i>William Wordsworth</i> . . .	84
85. London, 1802	<i>William Wordsworth</i> . . .	85
86. A Parsonage in Oxfordshire	<i>William Wordsworth</i> . . .	86
87. Nature	<i>Samuel Taylor Coleridge</i> . .	87
88. Fancy in Nubibus . . .	<i>Samuel Taylor Coleridge</i> . .	88
89. The Autumnal Moon . .	<i>Samuel Taylor Coleridge</i> . .	89
90. Farewell to Love	<i>Samuel Taylor Coleridge</i> . .	90
91. I ask not riches, and I ask not power	<i>Henry Francis Cary</i> . . .	91
92. The Mariner	<i>Robert Southey</i>	92
93. To a Friend	<i>Charles Lamb</i>	93
94. To Innocence	<i>Charles Lamb</i>	94
95. In Christian world <i>Mary</i> the garland wears . .	<i>Charles Lamb</i>	95
96. Night and Death	<i>Blanco White</i>	96
97. Eternal and Omnipotent Unseen	<i>Horace Smith</i>	97
98. On the Statue of a Piping Faun	<i>Horace Smith</i>	98
99. On a Green-House	<i>Horace Smith</i>	99
100. The Harvest Moon	<i>Lord Thurlow</i>	100
101. To a Water Bird	<i>Lord Thurlow</i>	101
102. To Amoret	<i>Lord Thurlow</i>	102
103. Fountain's Abbey	<i>Ebenezer Elliott</i>	103

	PAGE
104. The Grasshopper and the Cricket	<i>Leigh Hunt</i> 104
105. The Nile	<i>Leigh Hunt</i> 105
106. Orford Castle	<i>Bernard Barton</i> 106
107. The butterfly, which sports on gaudy wing	<i>Bernard Barton</i> 107
108. Winter	<i>Bernard Barton</i> 108
109. Past the grey tombs what space an arrow flies .	<i>Charles Strong</i> 109
110. Is this the spot where Rome's eternal foe . .	<i>Charles Strong</i> 110
111. Pacing, as I was wont, on day of rest	<i>Charles Strong</i> 111
112. Ere the wide waters on my view had smiled	<i>Charles Strong</i> 112
113. 'Twas near the walls that gird the imperial town.	<i>Charles Strong</i> 113
114. O Thou ! whose golden reins curb steeds of fire	<i>Charles Strong</i> 114
115. The Evening Cloud . . .	<i>John Wilson</i> 115
116. Go up among the mountains, when the storm .	<i>John Wilson</i> 116
117. The Tomb of Charlemagne	<i>Sir Aubrey de Vere</i> 117
118. The Landrail	<i>Sir Aubrey de Vere</i> 118
119. Thy cheek is pale with thought, but not from woe	<i>Lord Byron</i> 119
120. Lake Lemán	<i>Lord Byron</i> 120
121. Chillon	<i>Lord Byron</i> 121
122. The Fire-fly	<i>Bryan Waller Procter</i> 122
123. A Still Place	<i>Bryan Waller Procter</i> 123

CONTENTS.

xix

	PAGE
124. Life	<i>Thomas Doubleday</i> . . . 124
125. Ye hasten to the dead ! what seek ye there . . .	<i>Percy Bysshe Shelley</i> . . . 125
126. To the Nile	<i>Percy Bysshe Shelley</i> . . . 126
127. Ozymandias	<i>Percy Bysshe Shelley</i> . . . 127
128. Political Greatness	<i>Percy Bysshe Shelley</i> . . . 128
129. To Wordsworth	<i>Percy Bysshe Shelley</i> . . . 129
130. The Love of God, I.	<i>Dean Milman</i> 130
131. " " II.	<i>Dean Milman</i> 131
132. Huntspill Tower	<i>John Keble</i> 132
133. Oxford	<i>John Keble</i> 133
134. At Hooker's Tomb	<i>John Keble</i> 134
135. The Thrush's Nest	<i>John Clare</i> 135
136. Flight of the Spirit	<i>Felicia Hemans</i> 136
137. The Human Seasons	<i>John Keats</i> 137
138. On the Grasshopper and Cricket	<i>John Keats</i> 138
139. On Chapman's Homer	<i>John Keats</i> 139
140. Addressed to Haydon	<i>John Keats</i> 140
141. To one who has been long in city pent	<i>John Keats</i> 141
142. Solitude	<i>John Keats</i> 142
143. Happy is England ! I could be content	<i>John Keats</i> 143
144. To Sleep	<i>John Keats</i> 144
145. Keats's Last Sonnet	<i>John Keats</i> 145
146. Liberty	<i>Hartley Coleridge</i> 146
147. May, 1840	<i>Hartley Coleridge</i> 147
148. November	<i>Hartley Coleridge</i> 148
149. To a Deaf and Dumb Little Girl	<i>Hartley Coleridge</i> 149

	PAGE
150. When we were idlers with the loitering rills . . .	150
151. To a Lofty Beauty . . .	151
152. The First Man . . .	152
153. A Confession . . .	153
154. Homer . . .	154
155. Whither is gone the wis- dom and the power. . .	155
156. We parted on the moun- tains, as two streams . . .	156
157. The Lone Thorn . . .	157
158. Autumn . . .	158
159. Silence . . .	159
160. It is not death that some- time in a sigh . . .	160
161. A Sonnet to a Sonnet . . .	161
162. Joy in Sorrow . . .	162
163. Hidden Joys . . .	163
164. Pater Vester Pascit Illa . . .	164
165. The Twain . . .	165
166. Love . . .	166
167. The Lattice at Sunrise . . .	167
168. On Startling some Pigeons . . .	168
169. Time and Twilight . . .	169
170. It was her first sweet child . . .	170
171. A Summer Twilight . . .	171
172. The Quiet Tide near Ar- drossan . . .	172
173. Letty's Globe . . .	173
174. The Forest Glade . . .	174
175. The Gossamer-Light . . .	175

CONTENTS.

xxi

PAGE

176. In and out of the Pine- Wood	<i>Charles Tennyson Turner</i>	176
177. Irreparableness	<i>Elizabeth Barrett Browning</i>	177
178. Grief	<i>Elizabeth Barrett Browning</i>	178
179. Finite and Infinite	<i>Elizabeth Barrett Browning</i>	179
180. Comfort	<i>Elizabeth Barrett Browning</i>	180
181. Futurity	<i>Elizabeth Barrett Browning</i>	181
182. The Prospect	<i>Elizabeth Barrett Browning</i>	182
183. I thought once how Theocritus had sung	<i>Elizabeth Barrett Browning</i>	183
184. My own beloved, who hast lifted me	<i>Elizabeth Barrett Browning</i>	184
185. If thou must love me, let it be for nought	<i>Elizabeth Barrett Browning</i>	185
186. Is it indeed so? If I lay here dead	<i>Elizabeth Barrett Browning</i>	186
187. How do I love thee? Let me count the ways	<i>Elizabeth Barrett Browning</i>	187
188. Belovèd, thou hast brought me many flowers	<i>Elizabeth Barrett Browning</i>	188
189. If I might choose, where my tired limbs shall lie	<i>John Anster</i>	189
190. To the British Oak	<i>Charles Crocker</i>	190
191. Not war, nor hurrying troops from plain to plain	<i>Henry Alford</i>	191
192. The Master's Call	<i>Henry Alford</i>	192
193. But deck the board ;—for hither comes a band	<i>Henry Alford</i>	193
194. To Mary	<i>Henry Alford</i>	194
195. Lady, I bid thee to a sunny dome	<i>Arthur Henry Hallam</i>	195

196. Oh, blessing and delight of my young heart . . .	<i>Arthur Henry Hallam</i> . . .	196
197. To the Authoress of "Our Village".	<i>Charles Kingsley</i>	197
198. On the Ramparts at Angouleme	<i>Frederick William Faber</i>	198
199. Our thoughts are greater than ourselves, our dreams	<i>Frederick William Faber</i>	199
200. Like a musician that with flying finger	<i>William Caldwell Roscoe</i>	200
201. Sad soul, whom God, re- suming what He gave	<i>William Caldwell Roscoe</i>	201
202. Solitude	<i>Thomas Noel</i>	202
203. Time's Waves	<i>Thomas Noel</i>	203
204. The Aconite	<i>Thomas Noel</i>	204
205. Beauty still walketh on the earth and air	<i>Alexander Smith</i>	205
206. To America	<i>Sydney Dobell</i>	206
207. To a Friend in Bereave- ment	<i>Sydney Dobell</i>	207
208. Ad Matrem, 1862	<i>Julian Fane</i>	208
209. Ad Matrem, 1864	<i>Julian Fane</i>	209
210. Ad Matrem, 1870	<i>Julian Fane</i>	210
211. Brother and Sister	<i>George Eliot</i>	211
212. Brother and Sister	<i>George Eliot</i>	212
213. A Disappointment	<i>Alice Mary Blunt</i>	213
214. To a Brooklet	<i>David Gray</i>	214
215. The Luggie	<i>David Gray</i>	215
216. Sunset	<i>George Morine</i>	216
Notes		219



*CORN not the Sonnet ; Critic, you have frowned,
Mindless of its just honours ; with this key
Shakespeare unlocked his heart ; the melody
Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's wound ;
A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound ;
With it Camöens soothed an exile's grief ;
The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle-leaf
Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned
His visionary brow ; a glowworm lamp,
It cheered mild Spenser, called from Faery-land
To struggle through dark ways ; and, when a damp
Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand
The Thing became a trumpet ; whence he blew
Soul-animating strains—alas, too few !*

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

ENGLISH SONNETS.

EASTER MORNING.



OST glorious Lord of life ! that, on this day,
Didst make thy triumph over death and sin ;
And, having harrowed hell, didst bring away
Captivity thence captive, us to win :
This joyous day, dear Lord, with joy begin ;
And grant that we, for whom Thou diddest die,
Being with thy dear blood clean washed from sin,
May live for ever in felicity :
And that thy love we weighing worthily,
May likewise love Thee for the same again ;
And for thy sake, that all like dear didst buy,
With love may one another entertain !
So let us love, dear Love, like as we ought ;
Love is the lesson which the Lord us taught.

EDMUND SPENSER.

F

30

WILLING BONDAGE.



LIKE as a huntsman after weary chase
Seeing the game from him escaped away,
Sits down to rest him in some shady place
With panting hounds beguilèd of their prey ;
So, after long pursuit and vain assay,
When I all weary had the chase forsook,
The gentle deer returned the self-same way
Thinking to quench her thirst at the next brook ;
There she, beholding me with milder look,
Sought not to fly, but fearless still did bide ;
Till I in hand her yet half trembling took,
And with her own good-will her firmly tied ;—
Strange thing, meseemed, to see a beast so wild
So goodly won, with her own will beguiled.

EDMUND SPENSER.

TRUE BEAUTY.



NE call you fair, and you do credit it,
For that yourself you daily such do see ;
But the true fair, that is the gentle wit,
And virtuous mind, is much more praised of me :
For all the rest, however fair it be
Shall turn to nought, and lose that glorious hue ;
But only that is permanent and free
From frail corruption, that doth flesh ensue.
That is true beauty ; that doth argue you
To be divine, and born of heavenly seed ;
Derived from that fair Spirit from whom all true
And perfect beauty did at first proceed.
He only fair, and what He fair hath made ;
All other fair, like flowers, untimely fade.

EDMUND SPENSER.



LIKE as a ship that through the ocean wide,
By conduct of some star, doth make her way,
Whenas a storm hath dimmed her trusty guide,
Out of her course doth wander far astray, —
So I, whose star, that wont with her bright ray
Me to direct, with clouds is overcast,
Do wander now in darkness and dismay,
Through hidden perils round about me placed :
Yet hope I well that, when this storm is past,
My Helikè, the lodestar of my life,
Will shine again, and look on me at last,
With lovely light to clear my cloudy grief :
Till then I wander careful, comfortless,
In secret sorrow and sad pensiveness.

EDMUND SPENSER.



WITH how sad steps, O moon, thou climb'st the
skies,

How silently, and with how wan a face !

What ! may it be, that e'en in heavenly place

That busy Archer his sharp arrow tries ?

Sure if that long with love acquainted eyes

Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case ;

I read it in thy looks ; thy languished grace

To me, that feel the like, thy state describes.

Then, even of fellowship, O moon, tell me

Is constant love deemed there but want of wit ?

Are beauties there as proud as here they be ?

Do they above love to be loved, and yet

Those lovers scorn, whom that love doth possess ?

Do they call virtue there—ungratefulness ?

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.



HAVING this day my horse, my hand, my lance
Guided so well that I obtained the prize,
Both by the judgment of the English eyes
And of some sent from that sweet enemy, France ;
Horsemen my skill in horsemanship advance ;
Townfolks my strength ; a daintier judge applies
His praise to sleight, which from good use doth rise ;
Some lucky wits impute it but to chance :
Others, because of both sides I do take
My blood from them who did excel in this,
Think Nature me a man-at-arms did make.
How far they shot awry ! the true cause is,
Stella looked on ; and from her heavenly face
Sent forth the beams which made so fair my race.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.



SINCE Nature's works be good, and death doth
serve

As Nature's work, why should we fear to die ?
Since fear is vain but when it may preserve,
Why should we fear that which we cannot fly ?

Fear is more pain than is the pain it fears,
Disarming human minds of native might ;
While each conceit an ugly figure bears
Which were not evil, well viewed in reason's light.

Our owly eyes, which dimmed with passions be,
And scarce discern the dawn of coming day,
Let them be cleared, and now begin to see
Our life is but a step in dusty way.

Then let us hold the bliss of peaceful mind ;
Since this we feel, great loss we cannot find.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

A VISION UPON THE FAERY QUEEN.



ETHOUGHT I saw the grave where Laura lay,
Within that Temple where the vestal flame
Was wont to burn ; and passing by that way
To see that buried dust of living fame,
Whose tomb fair Love and fairer Virtue kept,
All suddenly I saw the Faery Queen :
At whose approach the soul of Petrarch wept ;
And from thenceforth those Graces were not seen,
For they this Queen attended ; in whose stead
Oblivion laid him down on Laura's hearse.
Hereat the hardest stones were seen to bleed,
And groans of buried ghosts the heavens did pierce,
Where Homer's spright did tremble all for grief,
And cursed the access of that celestial thief.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

THE CONSTANCY OF LOVE.



ERE I as base as is the lowly plain,
 And you, my Love, as high as heaven above,
 Yet should the thoughts of me your humble
 swain

Ascend to heaven in honour of my Love.
 Were I as high as heaven above the plain,
 And you, my Love, as humble and as low
 As are the deepest bottoms of the main,
 Wheresoe'er you were, with you my love should go.
 Were you the earth dear Love, and I the skies,
 My love should shine on you like to the sun,
 And look upon you with ten thousand eyes
 Till heaven waxed blind and till the world were done.
 Wheresoe'er I am, below or else above you,
 Wheresoe'er you are, my heart shall truly love you.

JOSHUA SYLVESTER.

FAVOUR.



LADY ! in beauty and in favour rare,
Of favour, not of due, I favour crave :
Nature to thee beauty and favour gave,
Fair then thou art, and favour thou may'st spare.
And when on me bestowed your favours are,
Less favour in your face you shall not have :
If favour then a wounded soul may save,
Of murder's guilt, dear lady, then beware.
My loss of life a million-fold were less
Than the least loss should unto you befall ;
Yet grant this gift : which gift when I possess,
Both I have life, and you no loss at all :—
For by your favour only I do live ;
And favour you may well both keep and give.

HENRY CONSTABLE.



BITY refusing my poor Love to feed,
A beggar starved for want of help he lies,
And at your mouth, the door of Beauty, cries
That thence some alms of sweet grants may proceed.
But as he waiteth for some alms-deed,
A cherry-tree before the door he spies—
“O dear!” quoth he, “two cherries may suffice,
Two only life may save in this my need.”
But beggars, can they nought but cherries eat?
Pardon my Love, he is a goddess’ son,
And never feedeth but on dainty meat,
Else need he not to pine as he hath done :
For only the sweet fruit of this sweet tree
Can give food to my Love, and life to me.

HENRY CONSTABLE.

THE LAST CHANCE.



SINCE there's no help, come let us kiss and part
Nay, I have done ; you get no more of me :
And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free ;
Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows,
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain.
Now at the last gasp of Love's latest breath,
When, his pulse failing, Passion speechless lies,
When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And Innocence is closing up his eyes,
Now, if thou would'st, when all have given him over,
From death to life thou might'st him yet recover.

MICHAEL DRAYTON.

TO THE RIVER ANKOR.



LEAR Ankor, on whose silver-sanded shore
My soul-shrined Saint, my fair Idea lies,
O blessed Brook, whose milk-white swans adore
The crystal stream refin'd by her eyes,
Where sweet myrrh-breathing zephyr in the spring
Gently distils his nectar-dropping showers,
Where nightingales in Arden sit and sing,
Amongst the dainty dew-impearl'd flowers ;
Say thus, fair Brook, when thou shalt see thy queen,
Lo, here thy shepherd spent his wandering years ;
And in these shades, dear nymph, he oft hath been ;
And here to thee he sacrificed his tears :—
Fair Arden, thou my Tempe art alone ;
And thou, sweet Ankor, art my Helicon :

MICHAEL DRAYTON.

TO SLEEP.



ARE-CHARMER Sleep, son of the sable night,
Brother to death, in silent darkness born,
Relieve my languish, and restore the light :
With dark forgetting of my care return,
And let the day be time enough to mourn
The shipwreck of my ill-adventured youth :
Let waking eyes suffice to wail their scorn,
Without the torment of the night's untruth.
Cease, dreams, the images of day-desires,
To model forth the passions of the morrow ;
Never let rising sun approve you liars,
To add more grief to aggravate my sorrow :
Still let me sleep, embracing clouds in vain,
And never wake to feel the day's disdain.

SAMUEL DANIEL.

REMEMBRANCE.



WHEN to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new, wail my dear time's waste :
Then can I drown an eye unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh Love's long since cancell'd woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight :
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoan'd moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.

But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored, and sorrows end.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

SUNSHINE AND CLOUD.



ULL many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy;
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly rack on his celestial face,
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace:
Even so my sun one early morn did shine
With all-triumphant splendour on my brow;
But, out, alack! he was but one hour mine,
The region cloud hath mask'd him from me now.

Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth;
Suns of the world may stain when heaven's sun staineth

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

THE TRUE AND THE FALSE.



, HOW much more doth beauty beauteous seem,
By that sweet ornament which truth doth give !
The rose looks fair, but fairer we it deem

For that sweet odour which doth in it live :
The canker-blooms have full as deep a dye
As the perfuméd tincture of the roses,
Hang on such thorns, and play as wantonly
When summer's breath their maskéd buds discloses :
But, for their virtue only is their show,
They live unwoo'd and unrespected fade ;
Die to themselves. Sweet roses do not so ;
Of their sweet deaths are sweetest odours made :
And so of you, beauteous and lovely youth,
When that shall fade, my verse distills your truth.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

THE WORLD'S WAY.



T IRED with all these, for restful death I cry,—
As, to behold desert a beggar born,
And needy nothing trimm'd in jollity,
And purest faith unhappily forsworn,
And gilded honour shamefully misplaced,
And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted,
And right perfection wrongfully disgraced,
And strength by limping sway disabled,
And art made tongue-tied by authority,
And folly, doctor-like, controlling skill,
And simple truth miscall'd simplicity,
And captive good attending captain ill :
—Tired with all these, from these would I be gone,
Save that, to die, I leave my love alone.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

LIFE'S AUTUMN.



HAT time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet bird sang :
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west,
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire,
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
Consumed with that which it was nourish'd by :—
This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,
To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

THE TRIUMPH OF DEATH.



O longer mourn for me when I am dead
Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell
Give warning to the world that I am fled
From this vile world, with vilest worms to dwell :
Nay, if you read this line, remember not
The hand that writ it ; for I love you so,
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,
If thinking on me then should make you woe.
O, if, I say, you look upon this verse
When I perhaps compounded am with clay,
Do not so much as my poor name rehearse,
But let your love even with my life decay,—
Lest the wise world should look into your moan,
And mock you with me after I am gone.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

THE GARDEN OF LOVE.



FROM you have I been absent in the spring,
When proud-pied April, dressed in all his trim,
Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing,
That heavy Saturn laughed and leaped with him.
Yet not the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell
Of different flowers in odour and in hue,
Could make me any summer's story tell,
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew ;
Nor did I wonder at the lily's white,
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose ;
They were but sweet, but figures of delight,
Drawn after you,—you pattern of all those.
Yet seem'd it winter still, and, you away,
As with your shadow I with these did play.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

THE FORWARD VIOLET THUS DID
I CHIDE :



SWEET thief, whence didst thou steal thy sweet
that smells,
If not from my Love's breath? The purple pride
Which on thy soft cheek for complexion dwells
In my Love's veins thou hast too grossly dyed.
The Lily I condemn'd for thy hand,
And buds of Marjoram had stolen thy hair :
The Roses fearfully on thorns did stand,
One blushing shame, another white despair :
A third, nor red nor white, had stolen of both
And to his robbery had annexed thy breath ;
But, for his theft, in pride of all his growth
A vengeful canker eat him up to death.
More flowers I noted, yet I none could see
But sweet or colour it had stolen from thee.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

HOPE AGAINST HOPE.



CALL not me to justify the wrong
That thy unkindness lays upon my heart ;
Wound me not with thine eye, but with thy
tongue ;

Use power with power, and slay me not by art.
Tell me thou lov'st elsewhere ; but in my sight,
Dear heart, forbear to glance thine eye aside :
What need'st thou wound with cunning, when thy might
Is more than my o'er-pressed defence can bide ?
Let me excuse thee : ah ! my love well knows
Her pretty looks have been mine enemies ;
And therefore from my face she turns my foes,
That they elsewhere might dart their injuries :
Yet do not so ; but since I am near slain,
Kill me outright with looks, and rid my pain,

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

THE BEAUTY OF BEAUTIES.



WHEN in the chronicle of wasted time
I see descriptions of the fairest wights,
And beauty making beautiful old rhyme
In praise of ladies dead and lovely knights;
Then, in the blazon of sweet beauty's best,
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,
I see their antique pen would have expressed
Even such a beauty as you master now.
So all their praises are but prophecies
Of this our time, all you prefiguring;
And, for they looked but with divining eyes,
They had not skill enough your worth to sing:
For we, which now behold these present days,
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

TRUE LOVE.



LET me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove :
O, no ! it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken ;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come ;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

A PICTURE.



O! as a careful housewife runs to catch
One of her feathered creatures broke away,
Sets down her babe, and makes all swift despatch
In pursuit of the thing she would have stay;
Whilst her neglected child holds her in chase,
Cries to catch her whose busy care is bent
To follow that which flies before her face,
Not prizing her poor infant's discontent;
So runn'st thou after that which flies from thee,
Whilst I, thy babe, chase thee afar behind;
But if thou catch thy hope, turn back to me,
And play the mother's part, kiss me, be kind:
So will I pray that thou mayst have thy 'Will,'
If thou turn back, and my loud crying still.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

SOUL AND BODY.



POOR soul, the centre of my sinful earth,
Fooled by these rebel powers that thee array,
Why dost thou pine within and suffer dearth,
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?
Why so large cost, having so short a lease,
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,
Eat up thy charge? is this thy body's end?
Then, Soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,
And let that pine to aggravate thy store;
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross;
Within be fed, without be rich no more:
So shalt thou feed on Death, that feeds on men,
And Death once dead, there's no more dying then.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

CONTENT.



H, sweet Content, where is thy mild abode?
Is it with shepherds and light-hearted swains
Which sing upon the downs and pipe abroad,
Tending their flocks and cattle on the plains?

Ah, sweet Content, where dost thou safely rest?

In heaven, with Angels which the praises sing
Of Him that made and rules at his behest
The minds and hearts of every living thing?

Ah, sweet Content, where doth thine harbour hold?

Is it in churches with religious men
Which please the gods with prayers manifold,
And in their studies meditate it then?

Whether thou dost in heaven or earth appear,
Be where thou wilt, thou wilt not harbour here.

BARNABE BARNES.

THE TALENT.



GRACIOUS, Divine, and most Omnipotent !
 Receive Thy servant's Talent in good part,
 Who hid it not, but willing did convert
 It to best use he could, when it was lent :
 The sum—though slender, yet not all misspent—
 Receive, dear God of grace ! from cheerful heart
 Of him that knows how merciful Thou art,
 And with what grace to contrite sinners bent.
 I know my fault, I did not as I should ;
 My sinful flesh against my soul rebell'd ;
 But since I did endeavour what I could,
 Let not my little nothing be withheld
 From Thy rich treasures of endless grace ;
 But (for Thy sake) let it procure a place.

BARNABE BARNES.

TO DEATH.



DEATH, be not proud, though some have called
thee

Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so ;
For those, whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow,
Die not, poor Death ; nor yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure ; then from thee much more must flow ;
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and souls' delivery.
Thou'rt slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well,
And better than thy stroke. Why swell'st thou then ?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally ;
And death shall be no more—Death, thou shalt die.

JOHN DONNE.

MARY MAGDALEN.

“ THESE Eyes (dear Lord) once brandons¹ of
desire,
Frailscouts betraying what they had to keep,
Which their own heart, then others set on fire,
Their traitrous black before Thee here out-weep :
These Locks, of blushing deeds the fair attire,
Smooth-frizzled waves, sad shelves which shadow deep,
Soul-stinging serpents in gilt curls which creep,
To touch Thy sacred feet do now aspire.
In seas of Care behold a sinking Bark,
By winds of sharp Remorse unto Thee driven,
O let me not exposed be ruin’s mark !
My faults confess,—Lord, say they are forgiven.”
Thus sighed to Jesus the Bethanian fair,
His tear-wet feet still drying with her hair.

WILLIAM DRUMMOND.

1 Torches

HUMAN FRAILTY.



GOOD that never satisfies the mind,
A beauty fading like the April flowers,
A sweet with floods of gall that runs combined,
A pleasure passing ere in thought made ours,
A honour that more fickle is than wind,
A glory at opinion's frown that lowers,
A treasury which bankrupt time devours,
A knowledge than grave ignorance more blind,
A vain delight our equals to command,
A style of greatness, in effect a dream,
A fabulous thought of holding sea and land,
A servile lot, decked with a pompous name,
Are the strange ends we toil for here below,
Till wisest death makes us our errors know.

WILLIAM DRUMMOND.



WEET Spring, thou turn'st with all thy goodly
train,

Thy head with flames, thy mantle bright with
flowers ;

The zephyrs curl the green locks of the plain,
The clouds for joy in pearls weep down their showers :
Thou turn'st, sweet youth ; but ah ! my pleasant hours
And happy days with thee come not again !

The sad memorials only of my pain
Do with thee turn, which turn my sweets to sour :
Thou art the same which still thou wast before,
Delicious, lusty, amiable, fair ;
But she, whose breath embalmed thy wholesome air,
Is gone ; nor gold, nor gems her can restore.

Neglected Virtue, seasons go and come,
While thine, forgot, lie clos'd in a tomb.

WILLIAM DRUMMOND.

D

BEFORE A POEM OF IRENE.



MOURN not, fair Greece, the ruin of thy kings,
Thy temples razed, thy forts with flames devoured,
Thy champions slain, thy virgins pure deflowered,
Nor all those griefs which stern Bellona brings :
But mourn, fair Greece, mourn that that sacred band
Which made thee once so famous by their songs,
Forced by outrageous fate, have left thy land,
And left thee scarce a voice to plain thy wrongs !
Mourn that those climates which to thee appear
Beyond both Phœbus and his sister's ways,
To save thy deeds from death must lend thee lays,
And such as from Musæus thou didst hear ;
For now Irene hath attained such fame,
That Hero's ghost doth weep to hear her name.

WILLIAM DRUMMOND.

NO TRUST IN TIME.



LOOK how the flower which lingeringly doth fade,
The morning's darling late, the summer's
queen,
Spoiled of that juice which kept it fresh and green,
As high as it did raise, bows low the head :
Right so my life, contentments being dead,
Or in their contraries but only seen,
With swifter speed declines than erst it spread,
And blasted, scarce now shows what it hath been.
As doth the pilgrim therefore, whom the night
By darkness would imprison on his way,
Think on thy home, my soul, and think aright
Of what yet rests thee of life's wasting day ;
Thy sun posts westward, passèd is thy morn,
And twice it is not given thee to be born.

WILLIAM DRUMMOND.



LEXIS, here she stayed ; among these pines,
Sweet hermitress, she did alone repair ;
Here did she spread the treasure of her hair,
More rich than that brought from the Colchian mines ;
She sat her by these muskèd eglantines—
The happy place the print seems yet to bear ;
Her voice did sweeten here thy sugared lines,
To which winds, trees, beasts, birds, did lend an ear ;
Me here she first perceived, and here a morn
Of bright carnations did o'erspread her face ;
Here did she sigh, here first my hopes were born,
And I first got a pledge of promised grace ;
But ah ! what served it to be happy so
Since passèd pleasures double but new woe ?

WILLIAM DRUMMOND.



TRUST not, sweet soul, those curl'd waves of gold
With gentle tides that on your temples flow ;
Nor temples spread with flakes of virgin snow,
Nor snow of cheeks with Tyrian grain enrolled :
Trust not those shining lights which wrought my woe,
When first I did their burning rays behold ;
Nor voice, whose sounds more strange effects do show
Than of the Thracian harper have been told :
Look to this dying lily, fading rose,
Dark hyacinth, of late whose blushing beams
Made all the neighbouring herbs and grass rejoice
And think how little is 'twixt life's extremes :
The cruel tyrant that did kill those flowers
Shall once, ay me ! not spare that spring of yours.

WILLIAM DRUMMOND.



DOWN in a valley, by a forest's side,
Near where the crystal Thames rolls on her
waves,

I saw a mushroom stand in haughty pride,
As if the lilies grew to be his slaves.
The gentle daisy, with her silver crown,
Worn in the breast of many a shepherd's lass,
The humble violet, that lowly down
Salutes the gay nymphs as they trimly pass,—
These, with a many more, methought complained
That Nature should those needless things produce,
Which not alone the sun from others gained,
But turn it wholly to their proper use.

I could not choose but grieve that Nature made
So glorious flowers to live in such a shade.

WILLIAM BROWNE.



ROSE, as fair as ever saw the North,
Grew in a little garden all alone ;
A sweeter flower did Nature ne'er put forth,
Nor fairer garden yet was ever known :
The maidens danced about it morn and noon,
And learn'd bards of it their ditties made ;
The nimble fairies, by the pale-faced moon,
Watered the root, and kissed her pretty shade.
But, welladay ! the gardener careless grew ;
The maids and fairies both were kept away,
And in a drouht the caterpillars threw
Themselves upon the bud and every spray.
God shield the stock ! if heaven send no supplies,
The fairest blossom of the garden dies.

WILLIAM BROWNE.



SING of brooks, of blossoms, birds, and bowers,
Of April, May, of June, and July-flowers ;
I sing of May-poles, hock-carts, wassails, wakes,
Of bride-grooms, brides, and of their bridal-cakes :
I write of Youth, of Love ;—and have access
By these, to sing of cleanly wantonness ;
I sing of dews, of rains, and, piece by piece,
Of balm, of oil, of spice, and ambergris.
I sing of times trans-shifting ; and I write
How roses first came red and lilies white :
I write of groves, of twilights, and I sing
The court of Mab, and of the Fairy King :
I write of Hell ; I sing, and ever shall,
Of Heaven,—and hope to have it after all.

ROBERT HERRICK.



YOU say I love not, 'cause I do not play
Still with your curls, and kiss the time away :
You blame me, too, because I can't devise
Some sport, to please those babies in your eyes ;—
By Love's religion, I must here confess it,
The most I love, when I the least express it :
Small griefs find tongues ; full casks are ever found
To give, if any, yet but little sound :
Deep waters noiseless are ; and this we know,
That chiding streams betray small depth below :
So when love speechless is, she doth express
A depth in love, and that depth bottomless.
Now since my love is tongueless, know me such
Who speak but little, 'cause I love so much.

ROBERT HERRICK.

LOVE.



IMMORTAL Love, author of this great frame,
Sprung from that beauty which can never fade ;
How hath man parcelled out thy glorious name,
And thrown it on that dust which thou hast made,
While mortal love doth all the title gain !
Which siding with Invention, they together
Bear all the sway, possessing heart and brain—
Thy workmanship—and give thee share in neither.
Wit fancies beauty, beauty raiseth wit ;
The world is theirs ; they two play out the game,
Thou standing by : and though thy glorious name
Wrought our deliverance from th' infernal pit,
Who sings thy praise ? Only a scarf or glove
Doth warm our hands, and make them write of love.

GEORGE HERBERT.



ORD, with what care hast Thou begirt us round !

Parents first season us ; then schoolmasters

Deliver us to laws ; they send us bound

To rules of reason, holy messengers,

Pulpits and Sundays, sorrow dogging sin,

Afflictions sorted, anguish of all sizes,

Fine nets and stratagems to catch us in,

Bibles laid open, millions of surprises,

Blessings beforehand, ties of gratefulness,

The sound of glory ringing in our ears ;

Without, our shame ; within, our consciences ;

Angels and grace, eternal hopes and fears.

Yet all these fences and their whole array

One cunning bosom-sin blows quite away.

GEORGE HERBERT.



Y God, where is that ancient heat towards Thee
Wherewith whole shoals of martyrs once did
burn,
Besides their other flames? Doth poetry
Wear Venus' livery,—only serve *her* turn?
Why are not sonnets made of Thee, and lays
Upon thine altar burnt? Cannot thy love
Heighten a spirit to sound out thy praise
As well as any she? Cannot thy Dove
Outstrip their Cupid easily in flight?
Or, since thy ways are deep, and still the same,
Will not a verse run smooth that bears thy Name?
Why doth that fire, which by thy power and might
Each breast does feel, no braver fuel choose
Than that which one day worms may chance refuse?

GEORGE HERBERT.

ON HIS BLINDNESS.



WHEN I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent, which is death to hide,
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He, returning, chide ;—
“Doth God exact day-labour, light denied ?”
I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, “God doth not need
Either man’s works or his own gifts. Who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
Is kingly ; thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o’er land and ocean without rest :—
They also serve who only stand and wait.”

JOHN MILTON.



ADY, that in the prime of earliest youth
Wisely hast shunned the broad way and the
green,

And with those few art eminently seen
That labour up the hill of heavenly truth,
The better part with Mary and with Ruth
Chosen thou hast ; and they that overween,
And at thy growing virtues fret their spleen,
No anger find in thee, but pity and ruth.
Thy care is fixed, and zealously attends
To fill thy odorous lamp with deeds of light,
And hope that reaps not shame. Therefore be sure
Thou, when the Bridegroom with his feastful friends
Passes to bliss at the mid-hour of night,
Hast gained thy entrance, Virgin wise and pure.

JOHN MILTON.

THE NIGHTINGALE.



NIGHTINGALE, that on yon bloomy spray
Warblest at eve, when all the woods are still,
Thou with fresh hope the lover's heart dost fill,
While the jolly hours lead on propitious May ;
Thy liquid notes that close the eye of day,
First heard before the shallow cuckoo's bill,
Portend success in love ; O, if Jove's will
Have linked that amorous power to thy soft lay,
Now timely sing, ere the rude bird of hate
Foretell my hopeless doom in some grove nigh ;
As thou from year to year hast sung too late
For my relief, yet hadst no reason why :
Whether the Muse or Love call thee his mate,
Both them I serve, and of their train am I.

JOHN MILTON.

ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEDMONT.



VENGE, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose
bones

Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold ;
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones,
Forget not : in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese, that rolled
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple tyrant ; that from these may grow
A hundred-fold, who, having learnt thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

JOHN MILTON.



AWRENCE, of virtuous father virtuous son,
Now that the fields are dank, and ways are
mire,

Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire
Help waste a sullen day, what may be won
From the hard season gaining? Time will run

On smoother, till Favonius re-inspire

The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire
The lily and rose, that neither sowed nor spun.
What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,

Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we may rise
To hear the lute well touched, or artful voice
Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air?

He who of those delights can judge, and spare
To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

JOHN MILTON.

E

WHEN THE ASSAULT WAS INTENDED TO
THE CITY (Nov., 1642).



APTAIN or Colonel, or Knight in Arms,
Whose chance on these defenceless doors may
seize,

If deed of honour did thee ever please,
Guard them, and him within protect from harms :
He can requite thee, for he knows the charms
That call fame on such gentle acts as these ;
And he can spread thy name o'er land and seas,
Whatever clime the sun's bright circle warms.
Lift not thy spear against the Muses' bower :
The great Emathian conqueror bid spare
The house of Pindarus, when temple and tower
Went to the ground ; and the repeated air
Of sad Electra's poet had the power
To save the Athenian walls from ruin bare.

JOHN MILTON.

ON THE RELIGIOUS MEMORY OF
MRS. CATHERINE THOMSON.



WHEN Faith and Love, which parted from thee
never,
Had ripened thy just soul to dwell with God,
Meekly thou didst resign this earthly load
Of death, called life, which us from life doth sever.
Thy works, and alms, and all thy good endeavour,
Stayed not behind, nor in the grave were trod;
But, as Faith pointed with her golden rod,
Followed thee up to joy and bliss for ever.
Love led them on; and Faith, who knew them best,
Thy handmaids, clad them o'er with purple beams
And azure wings, that up they flew so drest,
And spake the truth of thee on glorious themes
Before the Judge; who thenceforth bid thee rest,
And drink thy fill of pure immortal streams.

JOHN MILTON.

THE MEANING OF LIFE.



WHEN I behold thee, blameless Williamson,
Wrecked like an infant on a savage shore,
While others round on borrowed pinions soar,
My busy fancy calls thy thread mis-spun :
Till Faith instructs me the deceit to shun
While thus she speaks, 'Those wings that from the store
Of virtue were not lent, howe'er they bore
In this gross air, will melt when near the sun.
The truly ambitious wait for Nature's time,
Content by certain, though by slow degrees
To mount above the reach of vulgar flight ;
Nor is that man confined to this low clime,
Who but the extremest skirts of glory sees
And hears celestial echoes with delight.'

BENJAMIN STILLINGFLEET.

TO DAMPIER.



THIRCE worthy guardian of that sacred spring,
That erst with copious streams enriched this
land,
When Cæsar taught our nobles to command,
Tully to speak, Mæonides to sing;
Till Fashion, stealing with unheeded wing
Into this realm, with touch of foreign hand,
Our girls emboldened, and our boys unmanned,
And drew all ages to her magic ring:—
Yet shalt not thou be backward in thy sphere
To thwart a sickly world ; the sceptre given
Thou know'st to wield, and force the noble youth
To merit titles they were born to bear :
Thou know'st that every sceptre is from Heaven
That guides mankind to virtue and to truth.

BENJAMIN STILLINGFLEET.

ON THE DEATH OF RICHARD WEST.



IN vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire ;
The birds in vain their amorous descant join,
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire :
These ears, alas ! for other notes repine,
A different object do these eyes require ;
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine,
And in my breast the imperfect joys expire ;
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men ;
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear,
To warm their little loves the birds complain ;
I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear ;
And weep the more, because I weep in vain.

THOMAS GRAY.

ANNIVERSARY.



PLAINITIVE sonnet flowed from Milton's pen
When Time had stolen his three and twentieth
year :

Say shall not I then shed one tuneful tear
Robbed by the thief of three-score years and ten ?
No ! for the foes of all life-lengthened men,
Trouble and toil, approach not yet too near ;
Reason, meanwhile, and health, and memory dear,
Hold unimpaired their weak, yet wonted reign :
Still round my sheltered lawn I pleased can stray ;
Still trace my sylvan blessings to their spring :
Being of Beings ! yes, that silent lay,
Which musing Gratitude delights to sing,
Still to thy sapphire throne shall Faith convey,
And Hope, the cherub of unwearied wing.

WILLIAM MASON.

ON BATHING.



WHEN late the trees were stript by winter pale,
Young Health, a dryad-maid in vesture green,
Or like the forest's silver-quiver'd queen,
On airy uplands met the piercing gale ;
And, ere its earliest echo shook the vale,
Watching the hunter's joyous horn was seen.
But since, gay-throned in fiery chariot sheen,
Summer has smote each daisy-dappled dale ;
She to the caves retires, high-arched beneath
The fount that laves proud Isis' towered brim ;
And now, all glad the temperate air to breathe,
While cooling drops distil from arches dim,
Binding her dewy locks with sedgy wreath,
She sits amid the quire of Naiads trim.

THOMAS WARTON.

ON REVISITING THE RIVER LODON.



H ! what a weary race my feet have run
Since first I trod thy banks with alders crowned,
And thought my way was all through fairy
ground,
Beneath thy azure sky and golden sun,—
Where first my Muse to lisp her notes begun !
While pensive Memory traces back the round
Which fills the varied interval between ;
Much pleasure, more of sorrow, marks the scene.
Sweet native stream ! those skies and suns so pure
No more return to cheer my evening road !
Yet still one joy remains, that not obscure
Nor useless, all my vacant days have flowed
From youth's gay dawn to manhood's prime mature,
Nor with the Muse's laurel unbestowed.

THOMAS WARTON.

WRITTEN ON A BLANK LEAF OF
DUGDALE'S "MONASTICON."



DEEM not devoid of elegance the sage,
By fancy's genuine feelings unbeguil'd,
Of painful pedantry the poring child,
Who turns of these proud domes the historic page,
Now sunk by time, and Henry's fiercer rage.
Think'st thou the warbling Muses never smiled
On his lone hours? Ingenuous views engage
His thoughts on themes, unclassic falsely styled,
Intent. While cloistered Piety displays
Her mouldering roll, the piercing eye explores
New manners, and the pomp of elder days,
Whence culls the pensive bard his pictured stores.
Nor rough, nor barren, are the winding ways
Of hoar Antiquity, but strewn with flowers.

· THOMAS WARTON.

TO MARY UNWIN.



MARY! I want a lyre with other strings,
Such aid from heaven as some have feigned
they drew,

An eloquence scarce given to mortals, new
And undebased by praise of meaner things ;
That ere through age or woe I shed my wings,
I may record thy worth with honour due,
In verse as musical as thou art true,
And that immortalizes whom it sings :—
But thou hast little need ;—there is a Book
By seraphs writ with beams of heavenly light,
On which the eyes of God not rarely look,
A chronicle of actions just and bright ;—
There all thy deeds, my faithful Mary, shine ;
And since thou own'st that praise, I spare thee mine.

WILLIAM COWPER.

TO THE RIVER ARUN.



IN thy wild banks, by frequent torrents worn,
No glittering fanes, or marble domes appear,
Yet shall the mournful Muse thy course adorn,
And still to her thy rustic waves be dear :—
For with the infant Otway, lingering here,
Of early woes she bade her votary dream,
While thy low murmurs soothed his pensive ear,
And still the poet—consecrates the stream.
Beneath the oak and birch that fringe thy side,
The first-born violets of the year shall spring ;
And in thy hazels, bending o'er the tide,
The earliest Nightingale delight to sing :
—While kindred spirits, pitying, shall relate
Thy Otway's sorrows, and lament his fate !

CHARLOTTE SMITH.

WRITTEN AT THE CLOSE OF SPRING.



THE garlands fade that Spring so lately wove,
Each simple flower, which she had nursed in
dew,

Anemones, that spangled every grove,
The primrose wan, and harebell mildly blue.
No more shall violets linger in the dell,
Or purple orchis variegated the plain,
Till Spring again shall call forth every bell,
And dress with humid hands her wreaths again.
Ah, poor humanity ! so frail, so fair,
Are the fond visions of thy early day,
Till tyrant passion and corrosive care,
Bid all thy fairy colours fade away.
—Another May new buds and flowers shall bring
Ah ! why has happiness no second Spring ?

CHARLOTTE SMITH.

ON HEARING A THRUSH SING
IN A MORNING WALK, 25TH JAN., 1793.



SING on, sweet thrush, upon the leafless bough ;
Sing on, sweet bird, I listen to thy strain :
See aged winter, 'mid his surly reign,
At thy blithe carol clears his furrow'd brow.
So in 'lone poverty's dominion drear,
Sits meek Content with light unanxious heart,
Welcomes the rapid moments, bids them part,
Nor asks if they bring aught to hope or fear.
I thank thee, Author of this opening day !
Thou whose bright sun now gilds yon orient skies,
Riches denied, thy boon was purer joys,
What wealth could never give nor take away !
Yet come, thou child of poverty and care,
The mite high Heaven bestowed, that mite with thee
I'll share.

ROBERT BURNS.

ON THE DEATH OF ROBERT RIDDEL, OF
GRENRIDDEL, APRIL, 1794.



O more, ye warblers of the wood, no more !
Nor pour your descant, grating on my soul ;
Thou young-eyed Spring, gay in thy verdant
stole—

More welcome were to me grim winter's wildest roar.
How can ye charm, ye flowers, with all your dyes ?
Ye blow upon the sod that wraps my friend :
How can I to the tuneful strain attend ?
That strain flows round th' untimely tomb where Riddel lies !
Yes, pour, ye warblers, pour the notes of woe,
And soothe the Virtues weeping on his bier :
The Man of Worth, and has not left his peer,
Is in his narrow house for ever darkly low.
Thee, Spring, again with joy shall others greet ;
Me, memory of my loss will only meet.

ROBERT BURNS.

ON PARTING WITH HIS BOOKS.



S one who, destined from his friends to part,
Regrets his loss, yet hopes again erewhile
To share their converse and enjoy their smile,
And temper as he may affliction's dart ;—
Thus, loved associates ! chiefs of elder Art !
Teachers of wisdom ! who could once beguile
My tedious hours, and lighten every toil,
I now resign you : nor with fainting heart ;
For pass a few short years, or days, or hours,
And happier seasons may their dawn unfold,
And all your sacred fellowship restore ;
When, freed from earth, unlimited its powers,
Mind shall with mind direct communion hold,
And kindred spirits meet to part no more.

WILLIAM ROSCOE.

ECHO AND SILENCE.



IN eddying course when leaves began to fly,
And Autumn in her lap the store to strew,
As 'mid wild scenes I chanced the Muse to woo
Through glens untrod, and woods that frowned on high,
Two sleeping nymphs with wonder mute I spy !
And lo, she's gone !—in robe of dark-green hue,
'Twas Echo from her sister Silence flew ;
For quick the hunter's horn resounded to the sky !
In shade affrighted Silence melts away ;
Not so her sister :—hark ! for onward still
With far-heard step she takes her listening way,
Bounding from rock to rock, and hill to hill !
Ah, mark the merry maid in mockful play
With thousand mimic tones the laughing forest fill.

SIR SAMUEL EGERTON BRYDGES.

ABSENCE.



HERE is strange music in the stirring wind,
When lowers the autumnal eve, and all alone
To the dark wood's cold covert thou art gone,
Whose ancient trees on the rough slope reclined
Rock, and at times scatter their tresses sere.
If in such shades, beneath their murmuring,
Thou late hast passed the happier hours of spring,
With sadness thou wilt mark the fading year ;
Chiefly if one, with whom such sweets at morn
Or evening thou hast shared, far off shall stray.
O Spring, return ! return, auspicious May !
But sad will be thy coming, and forlorn,
If she return not with thy cheering ray,
Who from these shades is gone, gone far away.

WILLIAM LISLE BOWLES.

OSTEND.

(ON HEARING THE BELLS AT SEA.)



OW sweet the tuneful bells' responsive peal !
As when at opening morn the fragrant breeze
Breathes on the trembling sense of pale disease,
So piercing to my heart their force I feel !
And hark ! with lessening cadence now they fall !
And now along the white and level tide,
They fling their melancholy music wide ;
Bidding me many a tender thought recall
Of summer days, and those delightful years
When by my native streams, in life's fair prime,
The mournful magic of their mingling chime
First waked my wondering childhood into tears !
But seeming now, when all those days are o'er,
The sounds of joy once heard and heard no more.

WILLIAM LISLE BOWLES.

VALCLUSA.



HAT though, Valclusa, the fond bard be fled,
That wooed his fair in thy sequestered bowers,
Long loved her living, long bemoaned her dead,
And hung her visionary shrine with flowers !
What though no more he teach thy shades to mourn
The hapless chances that to love belong,
As erst, when drooping o'er her turf forlorn,
He charmed wild Echo with his plaintive song !
Yet still, enamoured of the tender tale,
Pale Passion haunts thy grove's romantic gloom,
Yet still soft music breathes in every gale,
Still undecayed the fairy garlands bloom,
Still heavenly incense fills each fragrant vale,
Still Petrarch's Genius weeps o'er Laura's tomb.

THOMAS RUSSELL.

AT LEMNOS.



N this lone isle, whose rugged rocks affright
The cautious pilot, ten revolving years
Great Pæan's son, unwonted erst to tears,
Wept o'er his wound : alike each rolling light
Of heaven he watched, and blamed its lingering flight :
By day the sea-mew, screaming round his cave,
Drove slumber from his eyes ; the chiding wave
And savage howlings chased his dreams by night.
Hope still was his : in each low breeze, that sighed
Through his rude grot, he heard a coming oar ;
In each white cloud a coming sail he spied ;
Nor seldom listened to the fancied roar
Of Ceta's torrents, or the hoarser tide
That parts famed Trachis from the Euboic shore.

THOMAS RUSSELL.



COULD then the Babes from yon unsheltered cot
Implore thy passing charity in vain ?
Too thoughtless Youth ! what tho' thy happier
lot

Insult their life of poverty and pain .

What tho' their Maker doomed them thus forlorn

To brook the mockery of the taunting throng,

Beneath th' oppressor's iron scourge to mourn,

To mourn, but not to murmur at his wrong !

Yet when their last late evening shall decline,

Their evening cheerful, though their day distress'd,

A Hope perhaps more heavenly-bright than thine,

A Grace by thee unsought, and unpossess'd,

A Faith more fixed, a Rapture more divine

Shall gild their passage to eternal Rest.

THOMAS RUSSELL.



T is a beauteous evening, calm and free ;
The holy time is quiet as a nun
Breathless with adoration ; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity ;
The gentleness of heaven is on the sea :
Listen ! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
Dear child ! dear girl ! that walkest with me here,
If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,
Thy nature is not therefore less divine :
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year,
And worship'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE.



ARTH has not anything to show more fair :
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty :
This city now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning ; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields and to the sky,
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill ;
Never saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !
The river glideth at his own sweet will :
Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep ;
And all that mighty heart is lying still !

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

ENGLAND AND SWITZERLAND, 1802.



TWO Voices are there ; one is of the sea,
One of the mountains ; each a mighty Voice :
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
They were thy chosen music, Liberty !
There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee
Thou fought'st against him ; but hast vainly striven :
Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,
Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.
Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft :
Then cleave, O cleave, to that which still is left ;
For, high-souled Maid, what sorrow would it be
That Mountain floods should thunder as before,
And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
And neither awful Voice be heard by thee !

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.



URPRISED by joy—impatient as the wind
I turned to share the transport—Oh, with whom
But thee, deep-buried in the silent tomb,
That spot which no vicissitude can find ?
Love, faithful love, recalled thee to my mind—
But how could I forget thee ? Through what power,
Even for the least division of an hour,
Have I been so beguiled as to be blind
To my most grievous loss ? That thought's return
Was the worst pang that sorrow ever bore,
Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,
Knowing my heart's best treasure was no more ;
That neither present time, nor years unborn,
Could to my sight that heavenly face restore.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.



ALM is all nature as a resting wheel.
The kine are couched upon the dewy grass ;
The horse alone, seen dimly as I pass,
Is cropping audibly his later meal :
Dark is the ground ; a slumber seems to steal
O'er vale and mountain, and the starless sky ;
Now, in this blank of things, a harmony,
Home-felt, and home-created, comes to heal
That grief for which the senses still supply
Fresh food ; for only then, when memory
Is hushed, am I at rest. My friends! restrain
Those busy cares that would allay my pain ;
Oh, leave me to myself ! nor let me feel
The officious touch that makes me droop again.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.



OW sweet it is, when mother Fancy rocks
The wayward brain, to saunter through a wood!
An old place, full of many a lovely brood,
Tall trees, green arbours, and ground-flowers in flocks;
And wild rose tip-toe upon hawthorn stocks,
Like a bold girl who plays her agile pranks
At wakes and fairs with wandering mountebanks,—
When she stands cresting the clown's head, and mocks
The crowd beneath her. Verily I think,
Such place to me is sometimes like a dream
Or map of the whole world : thoughts, link by link,
Enter through ears and eyesight, with such gleam
Of all things, that at last in fear I shrink,
And leap at once from the delicious stream.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH



UNS fret not at their convent's narrow room ;
And hermits are contented with their cells •
And students with their pensive citadels :
Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his loom,
Sit blithe and happy ; bees that soar for bloom,
High as the highest peak of Furness-fells,
Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells :
In truth, the prison unto which we doom
Ourselves, no prison is : and hence for me,
In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound
Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground ;
Pleased if some Souls (for such there needs must be)
Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,
Should find brief solace there, as I have found.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.



THE world is too much with us ; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our
powers :

Little we see in Nature that is ours ;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon !
This sea that bares her bosom to the moon,
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers ;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune ;
It moves us not.—Great God ! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn ;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn ;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea ;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

LONDON, 1802.



MILTON ! thou shouldst be living at this hour :
England hath need of thee : she is a fen
Of stagnant waters : altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men ;
Oh ! raise us up, return to us again ;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart ;
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea,
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free ;
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness ; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN
REPUBLIC.



NCE did She hold the gorgeous East in fee ;
And was the safeguard of the West : the worth
Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
Venice, the eldest child of Liberty.
She was a maiden city, bright and free ;
No guile seduced, no force could violate ;
And when she took unto herself a mate,
She must espouse the everlasting Sea.
And what if she had seen those glories fade,
Those titles vanish, and that strength decay,—
Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
When her long life hath reached its final day :
Men are we, and must grieve when even the Shade
Of that which once was great is passed away.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.



POET!—He hath put his heart to school,
Nor dares to move unpropped upon the staff
Which Art hath lodged within his hand—
must laugh

By precept only, and shed tears by rule.

Thy Art be Nature ; the live current quaff
And let the groveller sip his stagnant pool,
In fear that else, when Critics grave and cool
Have killed him, Scorn should write his epitaph.

How does the Meadow-flower its bloom unfold ?

Because the lovely little flower is free
Down to its root, and, in that freedom, bold ;

And so the grandeur of the Forest-tree
Comes not by casting in a formal mould,
But from its *own* divine vitality.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

G



WATCH, and long have watched, with calm
regret

Yon slowly-sinking star—immortal Sire

(So might he seem) of all the glittering quire !

Blue ether still surrounds him—yet—and yet ;

But now the horizon's rocky parapet

Is reached, where, forfeiting his bright attire,

He burns—transmuted to a sullen fire,

That droops and dwindles—and, the appointed debt

To the flying moments paid, is seen no more.

Angels and gods ! *we* struggle with our fate,

While health, power, glory, pitiably decline,

Depressed, and then extinguished : and our state

In this how different, lost star, from thine,

That no to-morrow shall our beams restore !

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.



THOUGHT of Thee, my partner and my guide,
As being past away.—Vain sympathies !
For backward, Duddon ! as I cast my eyes,
I see what was, and is, and will abide ;
Still glides the Stream, and shall for ever glide ;
The Form remains, the Function never dies ;
Which we, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,
We men, who in our morn of youth defied
The elements, must vanish ;—be it so !
Enough, if something from our hands have power
To live, and act, and serve the future hour ;
And if, as toward the silent tomb we go,
Through love, through hope, and faith's transcendent dower,
We feel that we are greater than we know.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

NOVEMBER, 1806.



ANOTHER year !—another deadly blow !
Another mighty empire overthrown !
And we are left, or shall be left, alone ;
The last that dare to struggle with the foe.
'Tis well ! from this day forward we shall know
That in ourselves our safety must be sought ;
That by our own right hands it must be wrought ;
That we must stand unpropped, or be laid low.
O dastard whom such foretaste doth not cheer !
We shall exult, if they who rule the land
Be men who hold its many blessings dear,
Wise, upright, valiant ; not a servile band,
Who are to judge of danger which they fear,
And honour which they do not understand.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

LONDON, 1802.



FRIEND ! I know not which way I must look

For comfort, being, as I am, opprest,

To think that now our life is only drest

For show ; mean handiwork of craftsman, cook,

Or groom !—We must run glittering like a brook

In the open sunshine, or we are unblest :

The wealthiest man among us is the best :

No grandeur now in nature or in book

Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,

This is idolatry ; and these we adore :

Plain living and high thinking are no more.

The homely beauty of the good old cause

Is gone ; our peace, our fearful innocence,

And pure religion breathing household laws.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

A PARSONAGE IN OXFORDSHIRE.



HERE holy ground begins, unhallowed ends,
Is marked by no distinguishable line ;
The turf invites, the pathways intertwine ;
And, wheresoe'er the stealing footstep tends,
Garden, and that domain where kindred, friends,
And neighbours rest together, here confound
Their several features, mingled like the sound
Of many waters, or as evening blends
With shady night. Soft airs from shrub and flower
Waft fragrant greetings to each silent grave ;
And while those lofty poplars gently wave
Their tops, between them comes and goes a sky
Bright as the glimpses of eternity
To saints accorded in their mortal hour.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

NATURE.



T may indeed be phantasy when I
Essay to draw from all created things
Deep, heartfelt, inward joy that closely clings;
And trace in leaves and flowers that round me lie
Lessons of love and earnest piety.
So let it be ; and if the wide world rings
In, mock of this belief, to me it brings
Nor fear, nor grief, nor vain perplexity.
So will I build my altar in the fields,
And the blue sky my fretted dome shall be,
And the sweet fragrance that the wild flower yields
Shall be the incense I will yield to Thee,
The only God ! and Thou shalt not despise
Even me, the priest of this poor sacrifice.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

FANCY IN NUBIBUS.



IT is pleasant, with a heart at ease,
Just after sunset, or by moonlight skies,
To make the shifting clouds be what you please,
Or let the easily-persuaded eyes
Own each quaint likeness issuing from the mould
Of a friend's fancy ; or, with head bent low
And cheek aslant, see rivers flow of gold
'Twixt crimson banks ; and then, a traveller, go
From mount to mount through Cloudland, gorgeous land !
Or listening to the tide, with closèd sight,
Be that blind bard who, on the Chian strand
By those deep sounds possessed with inward light,
Beheld the Iliad and the Odyssee
Rise to the swelling of the voiceful sea.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

THE AUTUMNAL MOON.



WILD splendour of the various-vested Night !
Mother of wildly-working-visions ! hail !
I watch thy gliding, while with watery light
Thy weak eye glimmers through a fleecy veil ;
And when thou lovest thy pale orb to shroud
Behind the gathered blackness lost on high ;
And when thou dartest from the wind-rent cloud
Thy placid lightning o'er the awakened sky.
Ah such is Hope ! as changeful and as fair !
Now dimly peering on the wistful sight ;
Now hid behind the dragon-winged Despair ;
But soon emerging in her radiant might
She o'er the sorrow-clouded breast of Care
Sails, like a meteor kindling in its flight.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

FAREWELL TO LOVE.



FAREWELL, sweet Love ! yet blame you not
my truth :

More fondly ne'er did mother eye her child
Than I your form. Yours were my hopes of youth,
And as you shaped my thoughts, I sighed or smiled.
While most were wooing wealth, or gaily swerving
To pleasure's secret haunts, and some apart
Stood strong in pride, self-conscious of deserving,
To you I gave my whole, weak, wishing heart.
And when I met the maid that realized
Your fair creations, and had won her kindness,
Say but for her if aught on earth I prized !
Your dream alone I dreamt, and caught your blindness.
O grief!—but farewell, Love ! I will go play me
With thoughts that please me less, and less betray me.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.



ASK not riches, and I ask not power,
Nor in her revel rout shall Pleasure view
Me ever,—a far sweeter nymph I woo.

Hail, sweet Retirement ! lead me to thy bower,
Where fair Content has spread her loveliest flower,
Of more enduring, though less gaudy hue,
Than Pleasure scatters to her giddy crew ;
Nor let aught break upon thy sacred hour,
Save some true friend, of pure congenial soul ;
To such the latchet of my wicket-gate
Let me lift freely, glad to share the dole
Fortune allows me, whether small or great,
And a warm heart, that knows not the control
Of Fortune, and defies the frown of Fate.

HENRY FRANCIS CARY.



GOD ! have mercy in this dreadful hour
On the poor mariner ! in comfort here
Safe sheltered as I am, I almost fear
The blast that rages with resistless power.
What were it now to toss upon the waves,
The maddened waves, and know no succour near :
The howling of the storm alone to hear,
And the wild sea that to the tempest raves ;
To gaze amid the horrors of the night
And only see the billow's gleaming light ;
Then in the dread of death to think of her
Who, as she listens sleepless to the gale,
Puts up a silent prayer and waxes pale,—
‘O God ! have mercy on the mariner !’

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

TO A FRIEND.



FRIEND of my earliest years and childish days,
My joys, my sorrows, thou with me hast shared,
Companion dear, and we alike have fared
(Poor pilgrims we) through life's unequal ways ;
It were unwisely done, should we refuse
To cheer our path as featly as we may,
Our lonely path to cheer, as travellers use,
With merry song, quaint tale, or roundelay ;
And we will sometimes talk past troubles o'er,
Of mercies shewn, and all our sickness healed,
And in his judgments God remembering love ;
And we will learn to praise God evermore
For those glad tidings of great joy revealed
By that sooth Messenger sent from above.


CHARLES LAMB.

TO INNOCENCE.



E were two pretty babes ; the youngest she,
The youngest, and the loveliest far, I ween,
And Innocence her name. The time has been
We two did love each other's company ;
Time was, we two had wept to have been apart.
But when, by show of seeming good beguiled,
I left the garb and manners of a child,
And my first love, for man's society,
Defiling with the world my virgin heart—
My loved companion dropped a tear, and fled,
And hid in deepest shades her awful head.
Belovéd, who shall tell me where thou art—
In what delicious Eden to be found—
That I may seek thee the wide world around.

CHARLES LAMB.

N Christian world *Mary* the garland wears !
Rebecca sweetens on a Hebrew's ear ;
Quakers for pure *Priscilla* are more clear ;
And the light Gaul by amorous *Ninon* swears ;
Among the lesser lights how *Lucy* shines !
What air of fragrance *Rosamond* throws round !
How like a hymn doth sweet *Cecilia* sound !
Of *Marthas*, and of *Abigails*, few lines
Have bragged in verse. Of coarsest household stuff
Should homely *Joan* be fashioned. But can
You *Barbara* resist, or *Marian* ?
And is not *Clare* for love excuse enough ?
Yet, by my faith in numbers, I profess,
These all than Saxon *Edith* please me less.

CHARLES LAMB.

NIGHT AND DEATH.



MYSTERIOUS Night ! when our first parent
knew
Thee from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue ?
Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
Hesperus with the host of heaven came,
And lo ! creation widened in man's view.
Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
Within thy beams, O Sun ! or who could find,
Whilst fly and leaf and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind !
Why do we then shun death with anxious strife ?
If Light can thus deceive, wherefore not Life ?

JOSEPH BLANCO WHITE.



TERNAL and Omnipotent Unseen !

Who bad'st the world, with all its lives complete,
Start from the void and thrill beneath thy feet,
Thee I adore with reverence serene ;

Here, in the fields, thine own cathedral meet,

Built by thyself, star-roofed, and hung with green,
Wherein all breathing things in concord sweet,
Organed by winds, perpetual hymns repeat.

Here hast thou spread that book to every eye,

Whose tongue and truth all, all may read and prove,
On whose three blessed leaves, Earth, Ocean, Sky,
Thine own right hand hath stamped might, justice, love ;
Grand Trinity, which binds in due degree
God, man, and brute, in social unity.

HORACE SMITH.

H

ON THE STATUE OF A PIPING FAUN.



MARK ! hear'st thou not the pipe of Faunus,
sweeping,
In dulcet glee, through Thessaly's domain ?
Dost thou not see embowered wood-nymphs peeping
To watch the Graces that around him reign ;
While distant vintagers, and peasants reaping,
Stand in mute transport, listening to the strain ;
And Pan himself, beneath a pine-tree sleeping,
Looks round, and smiles, and drops to sleep again ?

O happy Greece ! while thy blest sons were rovers
Through all the loveliness this earth discovers,
They in their minds a brighter region founded,
Haunted by gods and sylvans, nymphs and lovers,
Where forms of grace through sunny landscapes bounded,
By music and enchantment all surrounded.

HORACE SMITH.

ON A GREEN-HOUSE.



HERE, from earth's dædal heights and dingles
lowly,
The representatives of Nature meet ;
Not like a Congress, or Alliance Holy
Of Kings, to rivet chains, but with their sweet
Blossomy mouths to preach the love complete,
That with pearl'd misletoe, and beaded holly,
Clothed them in green unchangeable, to greet
Winter with smiles, and banish melancholy.

I envy not the Emathian madman's fame,
Who won the world, and built immortal shame
On tears and blood ; but if some flower, new found,
In its embalming cup might shroud my name,
Mine were a tomb more worthily renowned
Than Cheops' pile, or Artemisia's mound.

HORACE SMITH.

THE HARVEST MOON.



THE crimson moon, uprising from the sea,
With large delight, foretells the harvest near :
Ye shepherds, now prepare your melody
To greet the soft appearance of her sphere ;—
And, like a page enamoured of her train,
The star of evening glimmers in the west :
Then raise, ye shepherds, your observant strain,
That so of the Great Shepherd here are blest :—
Our fields are full with the time-ripened grain,
Our vineyards with the purple clusters swell ;
Her golden splendour glimmers on the main,
And vales and mountains her bright glory tell :
Then sing, ye shepherds, for the time is come
When we must bring the enrichèd harvest home.

LORD THURLOW.

TO A WATER BIRD.



MELANCHOLY bird !—a winter's day

Thou standest by the margin of the pool,

And, taught by God, dost thy whole being
school

To patience, which all evil can allay ;

God has appointed thee the fish thy prey ;

And given thyself a lesson to the fool

Unthrifty, to submit to moral rule,

And his unthinking course by thee to weigh.

There need not schools, nor the professor's chair,

Though these be good, true wisdom to impart ;

He who has not enough for these to spare

Of time or gold, may yet amend his heart,

And teach his soul by brooks and rivers fair ;

Nature is always wise in every part.

LORD THURLOW.

TO AMORET.



THE Summer, the divinest Summer burns,
The skies are bright with azure and with gold ;
The mavis and the nightingale, by turns,
Amid the woods a soft enchantment hold ;
The flowering woods, with glory and delight,
Their tender leaves unto the air have spread ;
The wanton air amid their alleys bright
Doth softly fly, and a light fragrance shed ;
The Nymphs within the silver fountains play ;
The Angels on the golden banks recline ;
Wherein great Flora, in her bright array,
Hath sprinkled her ambrosial sweets divine ;—
Or, else, I gaze upon that beauteous face,
O Amoret ! and think these sweets have place.

LORD THURLOW.

FOUNTAINS ABBEY.



ABBEY ! for ever smiling pensively,
How like a thing of Nature dost thou rise
Amid her loveliest works ! as if the skies,
Clouded with grief, were arched thy roof to be,
And the tall trees were copied all from thee !
Mourning thy fortunes—while the waters dim
Flow like the memory of thy evening hymn,
Beautiful in their sorrowing sympathy;
As if they with a weeping sister wept,
Winds name thy name ! But thou, tho' sad, art calm,
And Time with thee his plighted troth hath kept ;
For harebells deck thy brow, and, at thy feet,
Where sleep the proud, the bee and redbreast meet,
Mixing thy sighs with Nature's lonely psalm.

EBENEZER ELLIOTT.

TO THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE CRICKET.



GREEN little vaulter in the sunny grass,
Catching your heart up at the feel of June,
Sole voice that's heard amidst the lazy noon,
When even the bees lag at the summoning brass ;
And you, warm little housekeeper, who class
With those who think the candles come too soon,
Loving the fire, and with your tricksome tune
Nick the glad silent moments as they pass ;
Oh, sweet and tiny cousins, that belong,
One to the fields, the other to the hearth,
Both have your sunshine ; both, tho' small, are strong
At your clear hearts ; and both seem given to earth
To sing in thoughtful ears this natural song—
In doors and out, summer and winter, Mirth.

LEIGH HUNT.

THE NILE.



It flows through old hushed Egypt and its sands,
Like some grave mighty thought threading a
dream,

And times and things, as in that vision, seem
Keeping along it their eternal stands,—
Caves, pillars, pyramids, the shepherd bands
That roamed through the young world, the glory extreme
Of high Sesostris, and that southern beam,
The laughing queen that caught the world's great hands.
Then comes a mightier silence, stern and strong,
As of a world left empty of its throng,
And the void weighs on us ; and then we wake,
And hear the fruitful stream lapsing along
'Twixt villages, and think how we shall take
Our own calm journey on for human sake.

LEIGH HUNT.

ORFORD CASTLE.



BEACON for barks that navigate the stream
Of Ore or Alde, or breast the ocean spray :
Landmark for inland travellers far away
O'er heath and sheep-walk—as the morning beam,
Or the declining sunset's mellow gleam,
Lights up thy weather-beaten turrets gray ;
Still dost thou bear thee bravely in decay,
As if thy by-gone glory were no dream !
Yea, now with lingering grandeur thou look'st down
From thy once fortified, embattled hill,
As if thine ancient office to fulfil ;—
And though thy keep be but the ruin'd crown
Of Orford's desolate and dwindled town,
Seem'st to assert thy sovereign honour still.

BERNARD BARTON.



THE butterfly, which sports on gaudy wing ;
The brawling brooklet, lost in foam and spray,
As it goes dancing on its idle way ;
The sunflower, in broad daylight glistening ;
Are types of her who in the festive ring
Lives but to bask in fashion's vain display,
And glittering thro' her bright but useless day,
"Flaunts, and goes down a disregarded thing !"
Thy emblem, Lucy, is the busy bee,
Whose industry for future hours provides ;
The gentle streamlet, gladding as it glides
Unseen along,—the flower which gives the lea
Fragrance and loveliness, are types of thee,
And of the active worth thy modest merit hides.

BERNARD BARTON.

WINTER.

(TO WILLIAM AND MARY HOWITT.)



INTER hath bound the brooks in icy chains ;
The bee that murmured in the cowslip bell,
Now feasts securely in his honeyed cell ;
Silence is on the woods and on the plains,
And darkening clouds and desolating rains
Have marred your forest-fountain's quiet spell .
Yet, tho' retired from these awhile ye dwell,
Your hearts' best hoard of poesy remains.
The sports of childhood, the exhaustless store
Of home-born thoughts and feelings dear to each .
Converse, or silence eloquent as speech ;
History's rich page, tradition's richer lore
Of tale and legend prized in days of yore ;—
These, worthy of the Muse, are in your reach

BERNARD BARTON.



AST the grey tombs what space an arrow flies,
The darkening road winds down a hollow glade,
Romantic spot ! and sweetly solemn made
By over-arching trees of giant size :

Above, Aricia's battlements arise,
As on the branches of the lofty shade
The town were based, with all its long parade
Of domes and turrets basking in the skies.

More shadowy depths and varied tints of green
Not Vallombrosa clothe,—here, stranger, stay,
And on thy tablet spread the sylvan scene :—

Nor charmed alone the prospect's fair array ;
Old memories my raptures flashed between,
And peopled thick the silent Appian Way.

CHARLES STRONG.

Rome 1822.



Is this the spot where Rome's eternal foe
Into his snares the mighty legions drew,
Whence from the carnage, spiritless and few,
A remnant scarcely reached her gates of woe?

Is this the stream, thus gliding soft and slow,
That, from the gushing wounds of thousands, grew
So fierce a flood, that waves of crimson hue
Rushed on the bosom of the lake below?

The mountains that gave back the battle-cry
Are silent now ; perchance yon hillocks green
Mark where the bones of those old warriors lie.

Heaven never gladdened a more peaceful scene ;
Never left softer breeze a fairer sky
To sport upon thy waters, Thrasymene !

CHARLES STRONG.

PACING, as I was wont, on day of rest,
Amid the Coliseum's awful round,
From distant corridor there came a sound,
As of a voice that published tidings blest :

Along the vaulted way I forward press'd,
And soon a group of dark-eyed Romans found,
Intent and fixed, like men some spell had bound,
The Preacher with such power their souls address'd.

The words he spake, his gesture, and rapt look,
Betokened one whom Heaven had rendered bold
To ope the treasures of the sacred book.

Methought the Shepherd visibly forsook
Temples, where holy things were bought and sold,
For two or three thus gathered to his fold.

CHARLES STRONG.




RE the wide waters on my view had smiled,
From inland vale, in sunset's shapeful hue,
Oft Fancy traced their level line of blue,
And pictured cliffs where golden clouds were piled ;

Often the Sea-bird's wail my mind beguiled,
I loved the boisterous home from which they flew :
From out dark pines when winds loud murmurs drew,
Methought I heard the waves in chorus wild.

At length I blest a Brother's guiding hand,
The goal was reached, and as I stood entranced,
A new world viewing from the lofty land,

Sudden—around the precipice that veils
The western sky, a warrior-ship advanced,—
On the blue waste a Pyramid of Sails.

CHARLES STRONG.

 WAS near the walls that gird the imperial town,
Where from a lonely Convent's still retreat
I saw, whilst Tiber glowed beneath my feet,
From heaven's illumined vault the Sun go down ;

The lofty Capitol, like burnished crown,
Blazed on the City's brow,—each hallowed seat,
Each mournful relic of the perished Great,
Seemed once more brightening into old renown ;

The Plain in purple haze lay slumbering deep,
The giant arches, that bestrode it, shone
A bridge of gold to blue Albano's steep.

Man, here alas ! for ages overthrown,
With no gleam kindles, sunk in deathlike sleep,
His ruin, Rome, is darker than thine own.

CHARLES STRONG.



THOU ! whose golden reins curb steeds of fire,
Blest be the rosy hours that onward bring
Thy glorious pomp, now Night with folded wing
Hides in her cave, and heaven's pale host retire :

Fresh from their flowery beds the gales respire,
To rapture new awakes each living thing,
Rivers run joyous, woods harmonious ring,
As Earth, unveiling, shows her green attire.

Now Ocean shines distinct, the bark unmoors ;
Flocks to the dewy mountains from the fold
Go forth, the springing lark above them soars ;

And hopeful Man, as on thy state is roll'd,
Welcomes the beam that o'er the cluster pours
A deeper dye, and ripens fruits of gold.

CHARLES STRONG.

THE EVENING CLOUD.



CLOUD lay cradled near the setting sun ;
A gleam of crimson tinged its braided snow ;
Long had I watched the glory moving on,
O'er the still radiance of the lake below ;
Tranquil its spirit seemed and floated slow ;
Even in its very motion there was rest ;
While every breath of eve that chanced to blow
Wafted the traveller to the beauteous west.
Emblem, methought, of the departed soul,
To whose white robe the gleam of bliss is given ;
And by the breath of mercy made to roll
Right onward to the golden gates of Heaven ;
Where to the eye of Faith it peaceful lies,
And tells to man his glorious destinies.

JOHN WILSON.



O up among the mountains, when the storm
Of midnight howls, but go in that wild mood
When the soul loves tumultuous solitude,
And thro' the haunted air, each giant form
Of swinging pine, black rock, or ghostly cloud,
That veils some fearful catract, tumbling loud,
Seems to thy breathless heart with life imbued.
'Mid those gaunt shapeless things thou art alone !
The mind exists, thinks, trembles thro' the ear,
The memory of the human world is gone,
And time and space seem living only *here*.
O, worship thou the visions then made known,
While sable glooms round Nature's temple roll,
And her dread anthem peals into thy soul !

JOHN WILSON.

THE TOMB OF CHARLEMAGNE.



MID the torch-lit gloom of Aachen's isle
Stood Otho, Germany's imperial lord,
Regarding, with a melancholy smile,
A simple stone, where, fitly to record
A world of action by a single word,
Was graven "Carlo-Magno." Regal style
Was needed none: that name such thoughts restored
As sadden, yet make nobler men the while.
They rolled the marble back : with sudden gasp
A moment o'er the vault the Kaiser bent,
Where still a mortal monarch seemed to reign.
Crowned, on his throne, a sceptre in his grasp,
Perfect in each gigantic lineament,
Otho looked face to face on Charlemagne !

SIR AUBREY DE VERE.

THE LANDRAIL.



EAR, wakeful bird ! I bid thine accents hail,
When, like the voice of May, thy startling note
Comes wandering up the moonlit, grassy vale,
Or hill of springing corn, or reedy moat ;
Dearer I love thee than the classic throat,
Melodious, of the poet's nightingale,
When her aerial numbers wildly float,
Like fairy music, o'er some haunted dale.
'Tis thine to wake a sweeter harmony,
Thrilling the viewless chords of memory :—
To come upon the heart in silent hours,
Touching each trembling pulse deliciously ;
Recalling vows of youth, Hope's budding flowers,
And visions of pure love in amaranthine bowers !

SIR AUBREY DE VERE.

TO GENEVRA.



THY cheek is pale with thought, but not from
woe,

And yet so lovely, that if mirth could flush

Its rose of whiteness with the brightest blush,

My heart would wish away that ruder glow ;—

And dazzle not thy deep blue eyes,—but oh !

While gazing on them sterner eyes will gush,

And into mine my mother's weakness rush,

Soft as the last drops round heaven's airy bow.

For, through thy long dark lashes, low depending,

The soul of melancholy gentleness

Gleams like a seraph from the sky descending,

Above all pain, yet pitying all distress ;

At once such majesty with sweetness blending,

I worship more, but cannot love thee less.

LORD BYRON.

LAKE LEMAN.



OUSSEAU—Voltaire—our Gibbon—and De
Staël—

Leman ! these names are worthy of thy shore,
Thy shore of names like these ! wert thou no more
Their memory thy remembrance would recall :
To them thy banks were lovely as to all,
But they have made them lovelier, for the lore
Of mighty minds doth hallow in the core
Of human hearts the ruin of a wall
Where dwelt the wise and wondrous ; but by thee
How much more, Lake of Beauty ! do we feel,
In sweetly gliding o'er thy crystal sea,
The wild glow of that not ungentle zeal,
Which of the heirs of immortality
Is proud, and makes the breath of glory real !

LORD BYRON.

CHILLON.



ETERNAL Spirit of the chainless Mind !
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty, thou art—
For there thy habitation is the heart—
The heart which love of thee alone can bind ;
And when thy sons to fetters are consigned,
To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.
Chillon ! thy prison is a holy place,
And thy sad floor an altar, for 'twas trod,
Until his very steps have left a trace
Worn as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard ! May none those marks efface !
For they appeal from tyranny to God.

LORD BYRON.

THE FIRE-FLY.



TELL us, O Guide, by what strange natural laws
This winged flower throws out, night after
night,

Such lunar brightness? *Why*,—for what grave cause
Is this earth-insect crowned with heavenly light?

Peace! Rest content! See where, by cliff and dell,
Past tangled forest-paths and silent river,
The little lustrous creature guides us well,
And where we fail, his small light aids us ever.

Night's charming servant! Pretty star of earth!

I ask not why thy lamp doth ever burn.

Perhaps it is thy very life,—thy mind;

And thou, if robbed of that strange right of birth,

Might be no more than Man, when death doth turn

His beauty into darkness, cold and blind.

BRYAN WALLER PROCTER.

A STILL PLACE.



UNDER what beechen shade, or silent oak,
Lies the mute sylvan now, mysterious Pan?
Once, (while rich Peneus and Ilissus ran
Clear from their fountains,) as the morning broke,
'Tis said the Satyr with Apollo spoke,
And to harmonious strife with his wild reed
Challenged the god, whose music was indeed
Divine, and fit for heaven. Each played, and woke
Beautiful sounds to life,—deep melodies ;
One blew his pastoral pipe with such nice care
That flocks and birds all answered him ; and one
Shook his immortal showers upon the air.
That music hath ascended to the sun ;
But where the other ? Speak, ye dells and trees !

BRYAN WALLER PROCTER.

LIFE



COME, track with me this little vagrant rill,
Wandering its wild course from the mountain's breast ;

Now with a brink fantastic, heather-drest,
And playing with the stooping flowers at will ;
Now moving scarce, with noiseless step and still ;
Anon it seems to weary of its rest,
And hurries on, leaping with sparkling zest
Adown the ledges of the broken hill.
So let us live. Is not the life well spent
Which loves the lot that kindly Nature weaves
For all inheriting, or adorning, earth ?
Which throws light pleasure over true content,
Blossoms with fruitage, flowers as well as leaves,
And sweetens wisdom with a taste of mirth ?

THOMAS DOUBLEDAY.



E hasten to the dead ! What seek ye there,
Ye restless thoughts and busy purposes
Of the idle brain, which the world's livery wear !
O thou quick heart, which pantest to possess
All that anticipation feigneth fair !
Thou vainly curious mind, which wouldst guess
Whence thou didst come, and whither thou mayst go,
And that which never yet was known wouldst know—
Oh, whither hasten ye, that thus ye press
With such swift feet life's green and pleasant path,
Seeking alike from happiness and woe
A refuge in the cavern of grey death ?
O heart, and mind, and thoughts ! what thing do you
Hope to inherit in the grave below ?

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

TO THE NILE.



MONTH after month the gathered rains descend
Drenching yon secret Æthiopian dells,
And from the desert's ice-girt pinnacles
Where Frost and Heat in strange embraces blend
On Atlas, fields of moist snow half depend.
Girt there with blasts and meteors Tempest dwells
By Nile's aerial urn, with rapid spells
Urging its waters to their mighty end.
O'er Egypt's land of memory floods are level,
And they are thine, O Nile—and well thou knowest
That soul-sustaining airs and blasts of evil
And fruits and poisons spring where'er thou flowest.
Beware, O Man—for knowledge must to thee
Like the great flood to Egypt, ever be.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

OZYMANDIAS.



MET a traveller from an antique land
Who said : Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown
And wrinkled lip and sneer of cold command
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed ;
And on the pedestal these words appear :
' My name is Ozymandias, king of kings :
Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair !'
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

POLITICAL GREATNESS.



OR happiness, nor majesty, nor fame,
Nor peace, nor strength, nor skill in arms or
arts,

Shepherd those herds whom tyranny makes tame ;
Verse echoes not one beating of their hearts,
History is but the shadow of their shame,
Art veils her glass, or from the pageant starts.
As to oblivion their blind millions fleet,
Staining that heaven with obscene imagery
Of their own likeness. What are numbers knit
By force or custom ? Man who man would be,
Must rule the empire of himself ; in it
Must be supreme, establishing his throne
On vanquished will, quelling the anarchy
Of hopes and fears, being himself alone.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

TO WORDSWORTH.



P OET of Nature, thou hast wept to know
That things depart which never may return ;
Childhood and youth, friendship and love's
first glow,

Have fled like sweet dreams, leaving thee to mourn.

These common woes I feel. One loss is mine

Which thou too feel'st, yet I alone deplore.

Thou wert as a lone star, whose light did shine

On some frail bark in winter's midnight roar :

Thou hast like to a rock-built refuge stood

Above the blind and battling multitude.

In honoured poverty thy voice did weave

Songs consecrate to truth and liberty,—

Deserting these, thou leavest me to grieve,

Thus having been, that thou shouldst cease to be.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

(I.)



LOVE Thee !—O Thou, the world's eternal Sire !
Whose palace is the vast infinity,
Time, space, height, depth, O God ! are full of
Thee,

And sun-eyed seraphs tremble and admire.

Love Thee !—but Thou art girt with vengeful fire,
And mountains quake, and banded nations flee,
And terror shakes the wide unfathomed sea,
When the heavens rock with Thy tempestuous ire.

O Thou ! too vast for thought to comprehend,
That wast ere time,—shalt be when time is o'er ;
Ages and worlds begin—grow old—and end ;
Systems and suns Thy changeless throne before,
Commence and close their cycles :—lost, I bend
To earth my prostrate soul, and shudder, and adore !

HENRY HART MILMAN.

(II.)



LOVE thee !—oh, clad in human lowliness,
In whom each heart its mortal kindred knows—
Our flesh, our form, our tears, our pains, our
woes,—

A fellow-wanderer o'er earth's wilderness !
Love thee !—whose every word but breathes to bless !
Through Thee, from long-sealed lips, glad language flows ;
The blind their eyes, that laugh with light, unclosed ;
And babes, unchid, Thy garment's hem caress.
I see Thee, doomed by bitterest pangs to die,
Up the sad hill, with willing footsteps, move,
With scourge, and taunt, and wanton agony,
While the cross nods, in hideous gloom, above,
Though all—even there—be radiant Deity !
—Speechless I gaze, and my whole soul is Love !

HENRY HART MILMAN.

HUNTSPILL TOWER.




OVE beyond cove, in faint and fainter line
I trace the winding shore, and dream I hear
The distant billows where they break and shine
On the dark isles. Around us, far and near,
The bright gay breeze is sweeping cheerily,
Chequering the green moor, like the summer field
Of ocean, with the shadows of the sky.
In all their graceful majesty revealed,
Now purple-shaded, now in playful light,
To south and north the glorious hills are seen ;
Where hovering fancy may at will alight
By pastoral dingle, or deep rocky screen.
Such airs, light sallies of thy cheerful heart,
A living joy, dear friend, to all impart.

JOHN KEBLE.

OXFORD.

(FROM BAGLEY, AT 8 A.M.)

HE flood is round thee, but thy towers as yet
Are safe, and clear as by a summer's sea
Pierce the calm morning mist, serene and free,
To point in silence heavenward. There are met
Thy foster-children ;—there in order set
Their nursing-fathers, sworn to Heaven and thee
(An oath renewed this hour on bended knee,)
Ne'er to betray their Mother nor forget.—
Lo ! on the top of each aerial spire
What seems a star by day, so high and bright,
It quivers from afar in golden light :
But 'tis a form of earth, though touched with fire
Celestial, raised in other days to tell
How, when they tired of prayer, Apostles fell.

JOHN KEBLE.

AT HOOKER'S TOMB.



THE grey-eyed Morn was saddened with a shower,
A silent shower, that trickled down so still
Scarce drooped beneath its weight the tenderest
flower,

Scarce could you trace it on the twinkling rill,
Or moss-stone bathed in dew. It was an hour
Most meet for prayer beside thy lowly grave,
Most for thanksgiving meet, that Heaven such power
To thy serene and humble spirit gave.

'Who sow good seed with tears shall reap in joy.'
So thought I as I watched the gracious rain,
And deemed it like that silent sad employ
Whence sprung thy glory's harvest, to remain
For ever. God hath sworn to lift on high
Who sinks himself by true humility.

JOHN KEBLE.

THE THRUSH'S NEST.



WITHIN a thick and spreading hawthorn bush,
That overhung a molehill large and round,
I heard from morn to morn a merry thrush
Sing hymns to sunrise, and I drank the sound
With joy ; and, often an intruding guest,
I watched her secret toils from day to day,—
How true she warped the moss to form a nest,
And modelled it within with wood and clay ;
And by and by, like heath-bells gilt with dew,
There lay her shining eggs, as bright as flowers,
Ink-spotted-over, shells of greeny blue ;
And there I witnessed, in the sunny hours,
A brood of Nature's minstrels chirp and fly,
Glad as that sunshine and the laughing sky.

JOHN CLARE.

FLIGHT OF THE SPIRIT.



HITHER, oh ! whither wilt thou wing thy way ?
What solemn region first upon thy sight
Shall break, unveiled for terror or delight ?—
What hosts, magnificent in dread array,
My spirit ! when thy prison-house of clay,
After long strife is rent ? Fond, fruitless quest !
The unfledged bird, within his narrow nest,
Sees but a few green branches o'er him play,
And through their parting leaves, by fits revealed,
A glimpse of summer sky ; nor knows the field
Wherein his dormant powers must yet be tried.
Thou art that bird !—of what beyond thee lies
Far in the untracked immeasurable skies,
Knowing but this—that thou shalt find thy Guide.

FELICIA HEMANS.

THE HUMAN SEASONS.



OUR Seasons fill the measure of the year ;
There are four seasons in the mind of man :
He has his lusty Spring, when fancy clear

Takes in all beauty with an easy span :
He has his Summer, when luxuriously
Spring's honey'd cud of youthful thought he loves
To ruminate, and by such dreaming high
Is nearest unto heaven : quiet coves
His soul has in its Autumn, when his wings
He furlleth close ; contented so to look
On mists in idleness—to let fair things
Pass by unheeded as a threshold brook.
He has his Winter, too, of pale misfeature,
Or else he would forego his mortal nature.

JOHN KEATS.

ON THE GRASSHOPPER AND CRICKET.



HE poetry of earth is never dead :
When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,
And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead :
This is the grasshopper's—he takes the lead
In summer luxury,—he has never done
With his delights, for when tired out with fun,
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.
The poetry of earth is ceasing never :
On a lone winter evening, when the frost
Has wrought a silence, from the stove there shrills
The cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever,
And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,
The grasshopper's among some grassy hills.

JOHN KEATS.

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S
HOMER.



MUCH have I travelled in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen ;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-browed Homer ruled as his demesne :
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold :
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken ;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Looked at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

JOHN KEATS.

ADDRESSED TO HAYDON.



REAT spirits now on earth are sojourning :
He of the cloud, the cataract, the lake,
Who on Helvellyn's summit, wide awake,
Catches his freshness from Archangel's wing :
He of the rose, the violet, the spring,
The social smile, the chain for Freedom's sake :
And lo ! whose steadfastness would never take
A meaner sound than Raphael's whispering.
And other spirits there are standing apart
Upon the forehead of the age to come ;
These, these will give the world another heart
And other pulses. Hear ye not the hum
Of mighty workings?—
Listen awhile, ye nations, and be dumb.

JOHN KEATS.



O one who has been long in city pent,
'Tis very sweet to look into the fair
And open face of heaven,—to breathe a prayer
Full in the smile of the blue firmament.
Who is more happy, when, with heart's content,
Fatigued he sinks into some pleasant lair
Of wavy grass, and reads a debonair
And gentle tale of love and languishment?
Returning home at evening, with an ear
Catching the notes of Philomel,—an eye
Watching the sailing cloudlet's bright career,
He mourns that day so soon has glided by :
E'en like the passage of an angel's tear
That falls through the clear ether silently.

JOHN KEATS.



SOLITUDE ! if I must with thee dwell,

Let it not be among the jumbled heap

Of murky buildings : climb with me the
steep,—

Nature's observatory—whence the dell,

In flowery slopes, its river's crystal swell,

May seem a span ; let me thy vigils keep

'Mongst boughs pavilioned, where the deer's swift leap
Startles the wild bee from the foxglove bell.

But though I'll gladly trace these scenes with thee,

Yet the sweet converse of an innocent mind,

Whose words are images of thoughts refined,

Is my soul's pleasure ; and it sure must be

Almost the highest bliss of human-kind,

When to thy haunts two kindred spirits flee.

JOHN KEATS.



HAPPY is England! I could be content
To see no other verdure than its own ;
To feel no other brèezes than are blown
Through its tall woods with high romances blent :
Yet do I sometimes feel a languishment
For skies Italian, and an inward groan
To sit upon an Alp as on a throne,
And half forget what world or worldling meant.
Happy is England, sweet her artless daughters ;
Enough their simple loveliness for me,
Enough their whitest arms in silence clinging :
Yet do I often warmly burn to see
Beauties of deeper glance, and hear their singing,
And float with them about the summer waters.

JOHN KEATS.

TO SLEEP.



SOFT embálmer of the still midnight !
Shutting with careful fingers and benign,
Our gloom-pleased eyes, embowered from the
light,
Enshaded in forgetfulness divine :
O soothest sleep ! if so it please thee, close,
In midst of this thine hymn, my willing eyes,
Or wait the amen, ere thy poppy throws,
Around my bed its lulling charities ;
Then save me, or the passèd day will shine
Upon my pillow, breeding many woes ;
Save me from curious conscience, that still lords
Its strength, for darkness burrowing like a mole ;
Turn the key deftly in the oilèd wards,
And seal the hushèd casket of my soul.

JOHN KEATS.

KEATS'S LAST SONNET.



RIGHT star! would I were steadfast as thou
art—

Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night,
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like Nature's patient sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors.—
No—yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,
Pillowed upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest;
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever—or else swoon to death.

JOHN KEATS.

—

LIBERTY.



AY, What is Freedom? What the right of souls
Which all who know are bound to keep, or die,
And who knows not, is dead? In vain ye pry
In musty archives, or retentive scrolls,
Charters and statutes, constitutions, rolls,
And remnants of the old world's history :—
These show what has been, not what ought to be,
Or teach at best how wiser Time controls
Man's futile purposes. As vain the search
Of restless factions, who, in lawless will,
Fix the foundations of a creedless church—
A lawless rule—an anarchy of ill :
But what is Freedom? Rightly understood,
A universal license to be good.

HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

MAY, 1840.



LOVELY morn, so still, so very still,

It hardly seems a growing day of Spring,

Though all the odorous buds are blossoming,

And the small matin birds were glad and shrill

Some hours ago ; but now the woodland rill

Murmurs along, the only vocal thing,

Save when the wee wren flits with stealthy wing,

And cons by fits and bits her evening trill.

Lovers might sit on such a morn as this,

An hour together, looking at the sky,

Nor dare to break the silence with a kiss,

Long listening for the signal of a sigh ;

And the sweet Nun, diffused in voiceless prayer,

Feel her own soul through all the brooding air.

HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

NOVEMBER.



THE mellow year is hasting to its close ;
The little birds have almost sung their last,
Their small notes twitter in the dreary blast—
That shrill-piped harbinger of early snows ;
The patient beauty of the scentless rose,
Oft with the morn's hoar crystal quaintly glassed,
Hangs, a pale mourner for the summer past,
And makes a little summer where it grows :
In the chill sunbeam of the faint brief day
The dusky waters shudder as they shine,
The russet leaves obstruct the straggling way
Of oozy brooks, which no deep banks define,
And the gaunt woods, in ragged scant array,
Wrap their old limbs with sombre ivy-twine.

HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

TO A DEAF AND DUMB LITTLE GIRL.



LIKE a loose island on the wide expanse,
Unconscious floating on the fickle sea,
Herself her all, she lives in privacy ;
Her waking life as lonely as a trance,
Doomed to behold the universal dance,
And never hear the music which expounds
The solemn step, coy slide, the merry bounds,
The vague, mute language of the countenance.
In vain for her I smooth my antic rhyme ;
She cannot hear it, all her little being
Concentred in her solitary seeing—
What can she know of beauteous or sublime ?
And yet methinks she looks so calm and good,
God must be with her in her solitude.

HARTLEY COLERIDGE.



WHEN we were idlers with the loitering rills,
The need of human love we little noted :
Our love was nature : and the peace that floated
On the white mist, and dwelt upon the hills,
To sweet accord subdued our wayward wills :
One soul was ours, one mind, one heart devoted
That wisely doating asked not why it doated,
And ours the unknown joy which knowing kills.
But now I find how dear thou wert to me ;
That man is more than half of nature's treasure,
Of that fair beauty which no eye can see,
Of that sweet music which no ear can measure ;
And now the streams may sing for others' pleasure,
The hills sleep on in their eternity.

HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

TO A LOFTY BEAUTY FROM HER POOR
KINSMAN.

AIR maid, had I not heard thy baby cries,
Nor seen thy girlish, sweet vicissitude,
Thy mazy motions, striving to elude,
Yet wooing still a parent's watchful eyes,
Thy humours, many as the opal's dyes,
And lovely all ;—methinks thy scornful mood.
And bearing high of stately womanhood,—
Thy brow, where Beauty sits to tyrannize
O'er humble love, had made me sadly fear thee ;
For never sure was seen a royal bride
Whose gentleness gave grace to so much pride,—
My very thoughts would tremble to be near thee ;
But when I see thee at thy father's side,
Old times unqueen thee, and old loves endear thee.

HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

THE FIRST MAN.



HAT was't awakened first the untried ear
Of that sole man who was all human kind?
Was it the gladsome welcome of the wind,
Stirring the leaves that never yet were sere?
The four mellifluous streams which flowed so near,
Their lulling murmurs all in one combined?
The note of bird unnamed? The startled hind
Bursting the brake—in wonder, not in fear,
Of her new lord? Or did the holy ground
Send forth mysterious melody to greet
The gracious pressure of immaculate feet?
Did viewless seraphs rustle all around,
Making sweet music out of air as sweet?
Or his own voice awake him with its sound?

HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

A CONFESSION.



LONG time a child, and still a child, when years
Had painted manhood on my cheek, was I;
For yet I lived like one not born to die :
A thriftless prodigal of smiles and tears,
No hope I needed, and I knew no fears,
But sleep, though sweet, is only sleep ; and waking
I waked to sleep no more ; at once o'ertaking
The vanguard of my age, with all arrears
Of duty on my back. Nor child, nor man,
Nor youth, nor sage, I find my head is grey,
For I have lost the race I never ran—
A rathe December blights my lagging May ;
And still I am a child, though I be old :
Time is my debtor for my years untold.

HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

HOMER.



AR from the sight of earth, yet bright and plain
As the clear noon-day sun, an 'orb of song'
Lovely and bright is seen amid the throng
Of lesser stars, that rise, and wax, and wane,
The transient rulers of the fickle main ;
One constant light gleams thro' the dark and long
And narrow aisle of memory. How strong,
How fortified with all the numerous train
Of truths wert thou, great poet of mankind,
Who told'st in verse as mighty as the sea,
And various as the voices of the wind,
The strength of passion rising in the glee
Of battle. Fear was glorified by thee,
And Death is lovely in thy tale enshrined.

HARTLEY COLERIDGE.



WITHER is gone the wisdom and the power
That ancient sages scattered with the notes
Of thought-suggesting lyres? The music floats
In the void air ; even at this breathing hour,
In every cell and every blooming bower
The sweetness of old lays is hovering still ;
But the strong soul, the self-constraining will,
The rugged root that bare the winsome flower
Is weak and withered. Were we like the Fays
That sweetly nestle in the foxglove bells,
Or lurk and murmur in the rose-lipped shells
Which Neptune to the earth for quit-rent pays,
Then might our pretty modern Philomels
Sustain our spirits with their roundelays.

HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

TO A FRIEND.




E parted on the mountains, as two streams
From one clear spring pursue their several
ways ;

And thy fleet course hath been thro' many a maze
In foreign lands, where silvery Padus gleams
To that delicious sky, whose glowing beams
Brightened the tresses that old poets praise ;
Where Petrarch's patient love and artful lays,
And Ariosto's song of many themes,
Moved the soft air. But I, a lazy brook,
As close pent up within my native dell,
Have crept along from nook to shady nook,
Where flow'rets blow, and whispering Naiads dwell.
Yet now we meet, that parted were so wide,
O'er rough and smooth to travel side by side.

HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

THE LONE THORN.

ENEATH the scant shade of an aged thorn,
Silvered with age, and mossy with decay,
I stood, and there bethought me of its morn
Of verdant lustyhood, long passed away ;
Of its meridian vigour, now outworn
By cankering years, and by the tempest's sway
Bared to the pitying glebe.—Companionless,
Stands the gray thorn complaining to the wind—
Of all the old wood's leafy loveliness
The sole memorial that lags behind ;
Its compeers perished in their youthfulness,
Though round the earth their roots seem'd firmly twined :
How sad it is to be so anchored here
As to outlive one's mates, and die without a tear !

WILLIAM MOTHERWELL.

AUTUMN.



OW bravely Autumn paints upon the sky
The gorgeous fame of summer which is fled :
Hues of all flowers that in their ashes lie,
Trophied in that fair light whereon they fed,
Tulip, and hyacinth, and sweet rose red, —
Like exhalations from the leafy mould,
Look here how honour glorifies the dead,
And warms their scutcheons with a glance of gold !
Such is the memory of poets old,
Who on Parnassus hill have bloomed elate ;
Now they are laid under their marbles cold,
And turned to clay, whereof they were create ;
But god Apollo hath them all enrolled,
And blazoned on the very clouds of fate.

THOMAS HOOD.

SILENCE.



HERE is a silence where hath been no sound,
There is a silence where no sound may be,
In the cold grave—under the deep, deep sea,
Or in wide desert where no life is found,
Which hath been mute and still must sleep profound ;
No voice is hushed—no life treads silently,
But clouds and cloudy shadows wander free,
That never spoke, over the idle ground :
But in green ruins, in the desolate walls
Of antique palaces, where Man hath been,
Though the dun fox, or wild hyena calls,
And owls, that flit continually between,
Shriek to the echo, and the low winds moan,
There the true Silence is, self-conscious and alone.

THOMAS HOOD.



T is not death, that sometime in a sigh
This eloquent breath shall take its speech-
less flight ;

That sometime these bright stars, that now reply
In sunlight to the sun, shall set in night ;
That this warm conscious flesh shall perish quite,
And all life's ruddy springs forget to flow ;
That thoughts shall cease, and the immortal sprite
Be lapped in alien clay and laid below ;
It is not death to know this,—but to know
That pious thoughts, which visit at new graves
In tender pilgrimage, will cease to go
So duly and so oft,—and when grass waves
Over the past-away, there may be then
No resurrection in the minds of men.

THOMAS HOOD.

A SONNET TO A SONNET.



ARE composition of a poet-knight,
 Most chivalrous amongst chivalric men,
 Distinguished for a polish'd lance and pen
 In tuneful contest and in tourney-fight ;
 Lustrous in scholarship, in honour bright,
 Accomplished in all graces current then,
 Humane as any in historic ken,
 Brave, handsome, noble, affable, polite ;
 Most courteous to that race become of late
 So fiercely scornful of all kind advance,
 Rude, bitter, coarse, implacable in hate,
 To Albion, plotting ever her mischance,—
 Alas, fair verse ! how false and out of date
 Thy phrase “ sweet enemy ” applied to France !

THOMAS HOOD.

¹ See page 6.

JOY IN SORROW.



IVE me thy joy in sorrow, gracious Lord,
And sorrow's self shall like to joy appear !
Although the world should waver in its sphere
I tremble not if Thou thy peace afford ;
But, Thou withdrawn, I am but as a chord
That vibrates to the pulse of hope and fear :
Nor rest I more than harps which to the air
Must answer when we place their tuneful board
Against the blast,—which thrill unmeaning woe
Even in their sweetness. So no earthly wing
E'er sweeps me but to sadden. Oh, place Thou
My heart beyond the world's sad vibrating—
And where but in Thyself? Oh, circle me
That I may feel no touches save of Thee.

CHAUNCY HARE TOWNSHEND.

HIDDEN JOYS.



PLEASURES lie thickest where no pleasures
seem :

There's not a leaf that falls upon the ground
But holds some joy, of silence or of sound,
Some sprite begotten of a summer dream
The very meanest things are made supreme
With innate ecstasy. No grain of sand
But moves a bright and million-peopled land,
And hath its Edens and its Eves, I deem.
For Love, though blind himself, a curious eye
Hath lent me, to behold the hearts of things,
And touched mine ear with power. Thus, far or nigh,
Minute or mighty, fixed or free with wings,
Delight from many a nameless covert sly
Peeps sparkling, and in tones familiar sings.

SAMUEL LAMAN BLANCHARD.

"PATER VESTER PASCIT ILLA."



UR bark is on the waters ! wide around
The wandering wave ; above, the lonely sky :
Hush ! a young sea-bird floats, and that quick
cry

Shrieks to the levelled weapon's echoing sound :
Grasp its lank wing, and on, with reckless bound !
Yet, creature of the surf, a sheltering breast
To-night shall haunt in vain thy far-off nest,
A call unanswered search the rocky ground.
Lord of Leviathan ! when Ocean heard
Thy gathering voice, and sought his native breeze ;
When whales first plunged with life, and the proud deep
Felt unborn tempests heave in troubled sleep,
Thou didst provide, even for this nameless bird,
Home and a natural love amid the surging seas.

ROBERT STEPHEN HAWKER.

THE TWIN.



TWO sunny children wandered, hand in hand,
By the blue waves of far Gennesaret,
For there their Syrian father drew the net,
With multitudes of fishes, to the land !

One was the Twin ! even he whose blessed name
Hath in ten thousand shrines this day a fame,—
Thomas the Apostle,—one of the ethereal band !
But he, his Hebrew brother, who can trace
His name, the city where he dwelt, his place,
Or grave ? We know not, none may understand :
There were two brethren in the field : the one
Shall have no memory underneath the sun,—
The other shines, beacon of many a strand,
A star upon the brow of night, here in the rocky land !

ROBERT STEPHEN HAWKER.

LOVE.



HEART of my heart! of Love let us commune,
And tell me 'how it comes?' and 'what it is?'
"Love comes! and it is there replete with bliss;
A sun of light, bringing eternal noon,
New life to life; new powers, fresh flowers, its boon."
But what in sooth? "Two souls in sweet accord,
Each for each caring and each self unheard,
Bringing life's discords into perfect tune;
True to true feeling, and to nature living,
Plighting no faith, nor needing proof nor proving,
Taking for granted, never asking, giving,
Not doubting and not fearing 'how' or 'where';
Not caring if less bright or young or fair,
Sure to be ever loved, and sure of loving."

HELENA C. VON RANKE.

THE LATTICE AT SUNRISE.



AS on my bed at dawn I mused and prayed,
I saw my lattice pranked upon the wall,
The flaunting leaves and flitting birds withal—
A sunny phantom interlaced with shade ;
'Thanks be to heaven !' in happy mood I said,
'What sweeter aid my matins could befall
Than this fair glory from the East hath made ?
What holy sleights hath God, the Lord of all,
To bid us feel and see ! we are not free
To say we see not, for the glory comes
Nightly and daily, like the flowing sea ;
His lustre pierceth through the midnight glooms ;
And at prime hour, behold ! He follows me
With golden shadows to my secret rooms !'

CHARLES TENNYSON TURNER.

ON STARTLING SOME PIGEONS.



HUNDRED wings are dropt as soft as one,
Now ye are lighted ! Pleasing to my sight
The fearful circle of your wondering flight,
Rapid and loud, and drawing homeward soon ;
And then, the sober chiding of your tone,
As there ye sit, from your own roofs arrainging
My trespass on your haunts, so boldly done,
Sounds like a solemn and a just complaining :
O happy, happy race ! for though there clings
A feeble fear about your timid clan,
Yet are ye blest ! with not a thought that brings
Disquietude,—while proud and sorrowing man,
An eagle, weary of his mighty wings,
With anxious inquest fills his mortal span !

CHARLES TENNYSON TURNER.

TIME AND TWILIGHT.



IN the dark twilight of an autumn morn,
I stood within a little country-town,
Wherefrom a long acquainted path went down
To the dear village haunts where I was born ;
The low of oxen on the rainy wind,
Death and the Past, came up the well-known road,
And bathed my heart with tears, but stirr'd my mind
To tread once more the track so long untrod ;
But I was warn'd, ' Regrets which are not thrust
Upon thee, seek not ; for this sobbing breeze
Will but unman thee ; thou art bold to trust
Thy woe-worn thoughts among these roaring trees,
And gleams of by-gone playgrounds—Is't no crime
To rush by night into the arms of Time ?'

CHARLES TENNYSON TURNER.



T was her first sweet child, her heart's delight :
And, though we all foresaw his early doom,
We kept the fearful secret out of sight ;
We saw the canker, but she kiss'd the bloom.
And yet it might not be : we could not brook
To vex her happy heart with vague alarms,
To blanch with fear her fond intrepid look,
Or send a thrill through those encircling arms.
She smiled upon him, waking or at rest :
She could not dream her little child would die :
She toss'd him fondly with an upward eye :
She seem'd as buoyant as a summer spray,
That dances with a blossom on its breast,
Nor knows how soon it will be borne away.

CHARLES TENNYSON TURNER.

A SUMMER TWILIGHT.



T is a Summer's gloaming, balmy-sweet,
A gloaming brightened by an infant moon,
Fraught with the fairest light of middle June ;
The lonely garden echoes to my feet,
And hark ! O hear I not the gentle dews,
Fretting the silent forest in his sleep ?
Or does the stir of housing insects creep
Thus faintly on mine ear ? Day's many hues
Waned with the paling light and are no more,
And none but drowsy pinions beat the air :
The bat is hunting softly by my door,
And, noiseless as the snow-flake, leaves his lair ;
O'er the still copses flitting here and there,
Wheeling the self-same circuit o'er and o'er.

CHARLES TENNYSON TURNER.

THE QUIET TIDE NEAR ARDROSSAN.



N to the beach the quiet waters crept :
But, though I stood not far within the land,
No tidal murmur reached me from the strand.
The mirrored clouds beneath old Arran slept.
I looked again across the watery waste :
The shores were full, the tide was near its height,
Though scarcely heard : the reefs were drowning fast,
And an imperial whisper told the might
Of the outer floods, that press'd into the bay,
Though all besides was silent. I delight
In the rough billows, and the foam-ball's flight :
I love the shore upon a stormy day ;
But yet more stately were the power and ease
That with a whisper deepen'd all the seas.

CHARLES TENNYSON TURNER.

LETTY'S GLOBE.



WHEN Letty had scarce passed her third glad
year,
And her young, artless words began to flow,
One day we gave the child a coloured sphere
Of the wide earth, that she might mark and know,
By tint and outline, all its sea and land.
She patted all the world ; old empires peep'd
Between her baby fingers ; her soft hand
Was welcome at all frontiers. How she leap'd,
And laugh'd, and prattled in her world-wide bliss ;
But when we turned her sweet unlearned eye
On our own isle, she raised a joyous cry,
" Oh ! yes, I see it, Letty's home is there ! "
And, while she hid all England with a kiss,
Bright over Europe fell her golden hair.

CHARLES TENNYSON TURNER.

THE FOREST GLADE.



S one dark morn I trod a forest glade,
A sunbeam entered at the further end,
And ran to meet me thro' the yielding shade—
As one, who in the distance sees a friend,
And, smiling, hurries to him ; but mine eyes,
Bewilder'd by the change from dark to bright,
Received the greeting with a quick surprise
At first, and then with tears of pure delight ;
For sad my thoughts had been—the tempest's wrath
Had gloom'd the night, and made the morrow gray ;
That heavenly guidance humble sorrow hath,
Had turned my feet into that forest-way,
Just when His morning light came down the path,
Among the lonely woods at early day.

CHARLES TENNYSON TURNER.

THE GOSSAMER-LIGHT.



QUICK gleam ! that ridest on the gossamer !
How oft I see thee, with thy wavering lance,
Tilt at the midges in their evening dance,
A gentle joust set on by summer air !
How oft I watch thee from my garden-chair !
And, failing that, I search the lawns and bowers,
To find thee floating o'er the fruits and flowers,
And doing thy sweet work in silence there :
Thou art the poet's darling, ever sought
In the fair garden or the breezy mead ;
The wind dismounts thee not ; thy buoyant thread
Is as the sonnet, poising one bright thought,
That moves but does not vanish ! borne along
Like light,—a golden drift through all the song !

CHARLES TENNYSON TURNER.

IN AND OUT OF THE PINE-WOOD.



BEYOND the pine-wood all look'd bright and
clear—

And, ever by our side, as on we drove,
The star of eve ran glimpsing through the grove,
To meet us in the open atmosphere ;
As some fair thought, of heavenly light and force,
Will move and flash behind a transient screen
Of dim expression, glittering in its course
Through many loop-holes, till its face is seen ;
Some thoughts ne'er pass beyond their close confines ;
Theirs is the little taper's homely lot,
A woodside glimmer, distanced and forgot—
Whose trivial gleam, that twinkles more than shines,
Is left behind to die among the pines ;
Our stars are carried out, and vanish not !

CHARLES TENNYSON TURNER.

IRREPARABLENESS.



HAVE been in the meadows all the day
And gathered there the nosegay that you see,
Singing within myself as bird or bee
When such do field-work on a morn of May.

But now I look upon my flowers, decay
Has met them in my hands more fatally
Because more warmly clasped,—and sobs are free
To come instead of songs. What do you say,
Sweet counsellors, dear friends? that I should go
Back straightway to the fields and gather more?
Another, sooth, may do it, but not I!
My heart is very tired, my strength is low,
My hands are full of blossoms plucked before,
Held dead within them till myself shall die.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

GRIEF.



TELL you, hopeless grief is passionless ;
That only men incredulous of despair,
Half-taught in anguish, through the midnight
air

Beat upward to God's throne in loud access
Of shrieking and reproach. Full desertness
In souls as countries, lieth silent-bare
Under the blanching, vertical eye-glare
Of the absolute Heavens. Deep-hearted man, express
Grief for thy Dead in silence like to death—
Most like a monumental statue set
In everlasting watch and moveless woe
Till itself crumble to the dust beneath.
Touch it ; the marble eyelids are not wet :
If it could weep, it could arise and go.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

FINITE AND INFINITE.



HE wind sounds only in opposing straits,
The sea, beside the shore ; man's spirit rends
Its quiet only up against the ends
Of wants and oppositions, loves and hates
Where, worked and worn by passionate debates,
And losing by the loss it apprehends,
The flesh rocks round and every breath it sends
Is ravelled to a sigh. All tortured states
Suppose a straitened place. Jehovah Lord,
Make room for rest, around me ! out of sight
Now float me, of the vexing land abhorred,
Till in deep calms of space my soul may right
Her nature, shoot large sail on lengthening cord,
And rush exultant on the Infinite.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

COMFORT.



PEAK low to me, my Saviour, low and sweet
From out the hallelujahs, sweet and low,
Lest I should fear and fall, and miss Thee so
Who art not missed by any that entreat.

Speak to me as to Mary at Thy feet!

And if no precious gums my hands bestow,
Let my tears drop like amber while I go
In reach of Thy divinest voice complete
In humanest affection—thus, in sooth,
To lose the sense of losing. As a child,
Whose song-bird seeks the wood for evermore,
Is sung to in its stead by mother's mouth
Till, sinking on her breast, love-reconciled,
He sleeps the faster that he wept before.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

FUTURITY.



AND, O belovèd voices, upon which
Ours passionately call because erelong
Ye brake off in the middle of that song
We sang together softly, to enrich
The poor world with the sense of love, and witch
The heart out of things evil,—I am strong,
Knowing ye are not lost for aye among
The hills, with last year's thrush. God keeps a niche
In Heaven to hold our idols : and albeit
He brake them to our faces and denied
That our close kisses should impair their white,
I know we shall behold them raised, complete,
The dust swept from their beauty,—giorified,
New Memnons singing in the great God-light.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

THE PROSPECT.



ETHINKS we do as fretful children do,
Leaning their faces on the window-pane
To sigh the glass dim with their own
breath's stain,

And shut the sky and landscape from their view :

And thus, alas, since God the Maker drew

A mystic separation 'twixt those twain,

The life beyond us, and our souls in pain,

We miss the prospect which we are called unto

By grief we are fools to use. Be still and strong,

O man, my brother ! hold thy sobbing breath,

And keep thy soul's large window pure from wrong ;

That so, as life's appointment issueth,

Thy vision may be clear to watch along

The sunset consummation-lights of death.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.



THOUGHT once how Theocritus had sung
Of the sweet years, the dear and wished-for
years,

Who each one in a gracious hand appears
To bear a gift for mortals, old or young :
And, as I mused it in his antique tongue,
I saw, in gradual vision through my tears,
The sweet, sad years, the melancholy years,
Those of my own life, who by turns had flung
A shadow across me. Straightway I was 'ware,
So weeping, how a mystic shape did move
Behind me, and drew me backward by the hair ;
And a voice said in mastery, while I strove,—
'Guess now who holds thee?'—'Death,' I said. But there,
The silver answer rang,—'Not Death, but Love.'

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.



Y own belovèd, who hast lifted me
From this drear flat of earth where I was
thrown,

And, in betwixt the languid ringlets, blown
A life-breath, till the forehead hopefully
Shines out again, as all the angels see,

Before thy saving kiss ! My own, my own,
Who camest to me when the world was gone,
And I who looked for only God, found *thee* !
I find thee ; I am safe, and strong, and glad.

As one who stands in dewless asphodel,
Looks backward on the tedious time he had
In the upper life,—so I, with bosom-swell,
Make witness, here, between the good and bad,
That Love, as strong as Death, retrieves as well.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.



If thou must love me, let it be for nought
Except for love's sake only. Do not say
'I love her for her smile—her look—her way
Of speaking gently,—for a trick of thought
That falls in well with mine, and certes brought
A sense of pleasant ease on such a day ;'—
For these things in themselves, Belovèd, may
Be changed, or change for thee,—and love, so wrought,
May be unwrought so. Neither love me for
Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks dry,—
A creature might forget to weep, who bore
Thy comfort long, and lose thy love thereby !
But love me for love's sake, that evermore
Thou may'st love on, through love's eternity.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.



S it indeed so? If I lay here dead,
 Wouldst thou miss any life in losing mine?
 And would the sun for thee more coldly shine
 Because of grave-damps falling round my head?
 I marvelled, my Belovèd, when I read
 Thy thought so in the letter. I am thine—
 But . . . so much to thee? Can I pour thy wine
 While my hands tremble? Then my soul, instead
 Of dreams of death, resumes life's lower range.
 Then, love me, Love! look on me—breathe on me!
 As brighter ladies do not count it strange,
 For love, to give up acres and degree,
 I yield the grave for thy sake, and exchange
 My near sweet view of Heaven, for earth with thee!
 ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.



OW do I love thee? Let me count the ways.

I love thee to the depth and breadth and
height

My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.

I love thee to the level of every day's

Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.

I love thee freely, as men strive for Right ;

I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise ;

I love thee with the passion put to use

In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.

I love thee with a love I seemed to lose

With my lost saints,—I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life !—and, if God choose,

I shall but love thee better after death.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.



ELOVĒD, thou hast brought me many flowers
Plucked in the garden, all the summer through
And winter, and it seemed as if they grew
In this close room, nor missed the sun and showers.
So, in the like name of that love of ours,
Take back these thoughts which here unfolded too,
And which on warm and cold days I withdrew
From my heart's ground. Indeed, those beds and bowers
Be overgrown with bitter weeds and rue,
And wait thy weeding ; yet here's eglantine,
Here's ivy !—take them, as I used to do
Thy flowers, and keep them where they shall not pine ;
Instruct thine eyes to keep their colours true,
And tell thy soul, their roots are left in mine.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.



F I might choose, where my tired limbs shall lie
When my task here is done, the Oak's green
crest

Should rise above my grave—a little mound
Raised in some cheerful village-cemetery—
And I could wish, that, with unceasing sound
A lonely mountain rill was murmuring by—
In music—through the long soft twilight hours ;
And let the hand of her, whom I love best,
Plant round the bright green grave those fragrant flowers,
In whose deep bells the wild-bee loves to rest—
And should the robin, from some neighbouring tree,
Pour his enchanted song—oh, softly tread,
For sure, if aught of earth can sooth the dead,
He still must love that pensive melody !

JOHN ANSTER.

1815.

TO THE BRITISH OAK.



WHEN, sacred plant, the Druid sage of old,
With reverential awe, beheld in thee
The abode or emblem of Divinity,
Methinks some vague prophetic vision rolled
Before his wondering eyes, and dimly told
Thy future fame—thy glorious destiny :
Haply e'en then, deep musing, he might see,
Within thy trunk revered, that Spirit bold,
Which sprung from thence in after times, and stood,
Rejoicing in his might, on Ocean's flood,
The guardian genius of Britannia's Isle ;
At whose dread voice admiring nations bow,
In duteous homage,—tyrants are laid low—
And fierce Oppression's victims learn to smile.

CHARLES CROCKER.



NOT war, nor hurrying troops from plain to plain,
Nor deed of high resolve, nor stern command,
Sing I ; the brow that carries trace of pain
Long and enough the sons of song have scann'd :
Nor lady's love in honeysuckle bower,
With helmet hanging by, in stolen ease ;
Poets enough I deemed of heavenly power
Ere now had lavished upon themes like these.
My harp and I have sought a holier meed ;
The fragments of God's image to restore,
The earnest longings of the soul to feed,
And balms into the spirit's wounds to pour :
One gentle voice hath bid our task God-speed ;
And now we search the world to hear of more.

HENRY ALFORD.

THE MASTER'S CALL.



RISE, said the Master, come unto the feast :—
She heard the call and rose with willing feet ;
But thinking it not otherwise than meet
For such a bidding to put on her best,
She is gone from us for a few short hours
Into her bridal closet, there to wait
For the unfolding of the palace-gate,
That gives her entrance to the blissful bowers.
We have not seen her yet, though we have been
Full often to her chamber-door, and oft
Have listened underneath the postern green,
And laid fresh flowers, and whispered short and soft ;
But she hath made no answer ; and the day
From the clear west is fading fast away.

HENRY ALFORD.



UT deck the board ;—for hither comes a band
Of pure young spirits, fresh arrayed in white,
Glistering against the newly-risen light ;
Over the green and dew-impearl'd land
Blithsomenely tripping forward hand in hand :
Deck ye the board : and let the guest be dight
In gospel wedding-garment rich and bright,
And every bud that summer suns expand.
For you, ye humble ones, our thickets bloom :
Ye know the texture of each opening flower,
And which the sunshine, and which love the gloom.
The shrill of pois'd larks for many an hour
Ye watch ; and all things gentle in your hearts
Have place, and play at call their tuneful parts.

HENRY ALFORD

TO MARY.



N thy young brow, my sister, twenty years
Have shed their sunshine; and this April morn
Looks on thee fresh and gladsome, as new-born
From veiling clouds the king of day appears:
Thou scarce canst order back the thankful tears
That swell in thy blue eyes: nor dare to meet
The happy looks that never cease to greet
Thee the dear nursling of our hopes and fears.
This Easter-tide together we have read
How in the garden, when that weeping one
Asked sadly for her Lord of some unknown,
With look of sweet reproof He turned and said,
“Mary”—Sweet sister, when thy need shall be,
That word, that look, so may He turn on thee!

HENRY ALFORD



ADY, I bid thee to a sunny dome
 Ringing with echoes of Italian song:
Henceforth to thee these magic halls belong,
 And all the pleasant place is like a home.

Hark, on the right with full piano tone
 Old Dante's voice encircles all the air;
Hark yet again, like flute-tones mingling rare,
 Comes the keen sweetness of Petrarca's moan.
Pass thou the lintel freely: without fear
 Feast on the music: I do better know thee,
 Than to suspect this pleasure thou dost owe me
Will wrong thy gentle spirit, or make less dear
 That element whence thou must draw thy life,—
 An English maiden and an English wife.

ARTHUR HENRY HALLAM.



H blessing and delight of my young heart,
Maiden, who wert so lovely and so pure,
I know not in what region now thou art,
Or whom thy gentle eyes in joy assure.
Not the old hills on which we gazed together,
Not the old faces which we both did love,
Not the old books whence knowledge we did gather—
Not these, but others now thy fancies move.
I would I knew thy present hopes and fears,
All thy companions, with their pleasant talk,
And the clear aspect which thy dwelling wears ;
So, though in body absent, I might walk
With thee in thought and feeling, till thy mood
Did sanctify mine own to peerless good.

ARTHUR HENRY HALLAM.

TO THE AUTHORESS OF "OUR VILLAGE."



HE single eye, the daughter of the light;
Well pleased to recognize in lowliest shade
Some glimmer of its parent beam, and made
By daily draughts of brightness, inly bright :
The taste severe, yet graceful, trained aright
In classic depth and clearness, and repaid
By thanks and honour from the wise and staid,
By pleasant skill to blame and yet delight,
And high communion with the eloquent throng
Of those who purified our speech and song—
All these are yours. The same examples lure
You in each woodland, me on breezy moor—
With kindred aim the same sweet path along,
To knit in loving knowledge rich and poor.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

ON THE RAMPARTS AT ANGOULEME.



WHY art thou speechless, O thou setting Sun?
Speak to this earth, speak to this listening scene
Where Charente flows among the meadows
green,

And in his gilded waters, one by one,
The inverted minarets of poplar quake
With expectation, until thou shalt break
The intolerable silence. See! he sinks
Without a word; and his ensanguined bier
Is vacant in the west, while far and near
Behold! each coward shadow eastward shrinks.
Thou dost not strive, O Sun, nor dost thou cry
Amid thy cloud-built streets; but meek and still
Thou dost the type of Jesus best fulfil,
A noiseless revelation in the sky.

FREDERICK WILLIAM FABER.



OUR thoughts are greater than ourselves, our
dreams
Ofttimes more solid than our acts ; our hope
With more of substance and of shadow teems
Than our thin joys, and hath a nobler scope.
O sons of men ! there is a Presence here,
Here in our undying spirits, which
With an unearthly wealth doth oft enrich
The reason hourly sanctified by fear.
Herewith men prophesy, herewith men press
To their own hearts in studious loneliness
Forms greater than they dare to tell : beneath
The shadow of their own imaginings
They sit, withdrawn and sheltered ; for a wreath
Encircles them, a wreath of Angels' wings.

FREDERICK WILLIAM FABER.



LIKE a musician that with flying finger
Startles the voice of some new instrument,
And, though he know that in one string are blent
All its extremes of sound, yet still doth linger
Among the lighter threads, fearing to start
The deep soul of that one melodious wire,
Lest it, unanswering, dash his high desire,
And spoil the hopes of his expectant heart ;—
Thus, with my mistress oft conversing, I
Stir every lighter theme with careless voice,
Gathering sweet music and celestial joys
From the harmonious soul o'er which I fly ;
Yet o'er the one deep master-chord I hover,
And dare not stoop, fearing to tell—I love her.

WILLIAM CALDWELL ROSCOE.



AD soul, whom God, resuming what He gave,
Medicines with bitter anguish of the tomb,
Cease to oppress the portals of the grave,
And strain thy aching sight across the gloom.
The surged Atlantic's winter-beaten wave
Shall sooner pierce the purpose of the wind,
Than thy storm-tossed and heavy-swelling mind
Grasp the full import of his means to save.
Through the dark night lie still ; God's faithful grace
Lies hid, like morning, underneath the sea ;
Let thy slow hours roll, like these weary stars,
Down to the level ocean patiently ;
Till his loved hands shall touch the Eastern bars,
And his full glory shine upon thy face.

WILLIAM CALDWELL ROSCOE.

SOLITUDE.



SOLITUDE!—amidst these ancient oaks,
Whose shadows broad sleep on the mossy
ground,

And breeze-fanned boughs send forth a slumberous sound,
Whose rugged trunks the hoary lichen cloaks,
Where leaps the squirrel, and the raven croaks—

These rifted thorns, with snaky ivy bound,
In many a fold fantastic, round and round,—
These tree-Laocoons—which the woodman's strokes
Shall never make to totter to their fall,—

Which time alone shall waste,—how dear art thou
To me, who commune with thy calmness now,
When peaceful Evening spreads her purple pall,
And Contemplation, with her scroll unfurled,
Brings sad-sweet thoughts to wean me from the world

THOMAS NOEL.

TIME'S WAVES



AVE follows wave towards the waste sea-shore,
One rising where another doth subside ;
So day to day succeedeth evermore,
Those silent waves on Time's unresting tide ;
And we are like the ocean-birds, that ride
Upon the billows ; on their summits hoar
One moment now they sit, and seem to soar ;
The next, into the black abyss they glide :—
Thus we elated rise, and are deprest
Upon the changeful billow of each day,
In light and gloom alternate, ne'er at rest,
In good nor evil ever at a stay,
Yet looking still to find some halcyon nest
Of peace, when all Time's waves have passed away.

THOMAS NOEL.

THE ACONITE.



LOWER, that foretell'st a Spring thou ne'er shalt
see,

Yet smilest still upon thy wintry day,
Content with thy joy-giving destiny,
Nor envying fairer flowers their festal May,—
O golden-chaliced Aconite ! I'll lay
To heart the lesson that thou teachest me ;
I, too, contented with my times will be,
And still a placid aspect will display
In tempest-troubled seasons,—nor repine
That others, coming after, shall enjoy
A calmer day, a sunnier sky than mine ;
To speed the present, be my sweet employ ;
To cast into a stormy world my mite
Of cheer, like thee, gloom-gilding Aconite !

THOMAS NOEL.



BEAUTY still walketh on the earth and air :
Our present sunsets are as rich in gold
As ere the Iliad's music was out-rolled ;
The roses of the Spring are ever fair,
'Mong branches green still ring-doves coo and pair,
And the deep sea still foams its music old :
So, if we are at all divinely-souled,
This beauty will unloose our bonds of care.
'Tis pleasant, when blue skies are o'er us bending
Within old starry-gated Poesy,
To meet a soul set to no worldly tune,
Like thine, sweet Friend ! Oh, dearer this to me
Than are the dewy trees, the sun, the moon,
Or noble music with a golden ending.

ALEXANDER SMITH.

TO AMERICA.



OR force nor fraud shall sunder us ! Oh ye
Who north or south, on east or western land,
Native to noble sounds, say truth for truth,
Freedom for freedom, love for love, and God
For God ; Oh ye who in eternal youth
Speak with a living and creative flood
This universal English, and do stand
Its breathing book ; live worthy of that grand
Heroic utterance—parted, yet a whole,
Far, yet unsevered—children brave and free
Of the great mother-tongue, and ye shall be
Lords of an empire wide as Shakspeare's soul,
Sublime as Milton's immemorial theme,
And rich as Chaucer's speech, and fair as Spenser's dream.

SYDNEY DOBELL.

TO A FRIEND IN BEREAVEMENT.



O comfort, nay, no comfort. Yet would I
In Sorrow's cause with Sorrow intercede.
Burst not the great heart,—this is all I plead ;
Ah, sentence it to suffer, not to die.
“ Comfort ? ” If Jesus wept at Bethany—
That doze and nap of Death—how may we bleed
Who watch the long sleep that is sleep indeed !
Pointing to Heaven I but remind you why
On earth you still must mourn. He who, being bold
For life-to-come, is false to the past sweet
Of mortal life, hath killed the world above.
For why to live again if not to meet ?
And why to meet if not to meet in love ?
And why in love if not in that dear love of old ?

SYDNEY DOBELL.

AD MATREM.

(MARCH 13, 1862.)



FT in the after-days, when thou and I
Have fallen from the scope of human view,
When, both together, under the sweet sky
We sleep beneath the daisies and the dew,
Men will recall thy gracious presence bland,
Conning the pictured sweetness of thy face;
Will pore o'er paintings by thy plastic hand,
And vaunt thy skill, and tell thy deeds of grace.
Oh may they then, who crown thee with true bays,
Saying, "What love unto her son she bore!"
Make this addition to thy perfect praise,
"Nor ever yet was mother worshipped more!"
So shall I live with thee, and thy dear fame
Shall link my love unto thine honoured name.

JULIAN FANE.

AD MATREM.

(MARCH 13, 1864.)



MUSIC, and frankincense of flowers, belong
To this sweet festival of all the year.
Take, then, the latest blossom of my song,
And to Love's canticle incline thine ear.
What is it that Love chaunts? thy perfect praise.
What is it that Love prays? worthy to prove.
What is it Love desires? thy length of days.
What is it that Love asks? return of love.
Ah, what requital can Love ask more dear
Than by Love's priceless self to be repaid?
Thy liberal love, increasing year by year,
Hath granted more than all my heart hath prayed,
And, prodigal as Nature, makes me pine
To think how poor my love compared with thine!

JULIAN FANE.

P

AD MATREM.

(MARCH 13, 1870.)



O, like a wanderer from the world of shades,
Back to the firm earth and familiar skies,
Back to that light of love that never fades—

The unbroken sunshine of thy blissful eyes,
I come—to greet thee on this happy day
That lets a fresh pearl on thy life appear ;
That decks thy jewelled age with fresh array
Of good deeds done within the circled year ;
So art thou robed in majesty of grace,
In regal purple of pure womanhood ;
Throned in thy high pre-eminence of place ;
Sceptred and crowned, a very Queen of Good.
Receive my blessing, perfect as thou art,
Queen of all good, and sovereign of my heart.

JULIAN FANE.

A DISAPPOINTMENT.



SPRING, of a sudden, came to life one day.
Ere this, the winter had been cold and chill.
That morning first the summer air did fill
The world, making bleak March seem almost May.
The daffodils were blooming golden gay ;
The birch trees budded purple on the hill ;
The rose, that clambered up the window-sill,
Put forth a crimson shoot. All yesterday
The winds about the casement chilly blew,
But now the breeze that played about the door,
So caught the dead leaves that I thought there flew
Brown butterflies up from the grassy floor.
—But someone said you came not. Ah, too true !
And I, I thought that winter reigned once more.

ALICE MARY BLUNT.

BROTHER AND SISTER.



OUR mother bade us keep the trodden ways,
Stroked down my tippet, set my brother's frill,
Then with the benediction of her gaze
Clung to us lessening, and pursued us still
Across the homestead to the rookery elms,
Whose tall old trunks had each a grassy mound,
So rich for us, we counted them as realms
With varied products : here were earth-nuts found,
And here the Lady-fingers in deep shade ;
Here sloping toward the Moat the rushes grew,
The large to split for pith, the small to braid ;
While over all the dark rooks cawing flew,
And made a happy strange solemnity,
A deep-toned chant from life unknown to me,

GEORGE ELIOT.

BROTHER AND SISTER.



THUS rambling we were schooled in deepest lore,
And learned the meanings that give words a
soul,
The fear, the love, the primal passionate store,
Whose shaping impulses make manhood whole :
Those hours were seed to all my after good ;
My infant gladness, through eye, ear, and touch,
Took easily as warmth a various food
To nourish the sweet skill of loving much.
For who in age shall roam the earth and find
Reasons for loving that will strike out love
With sudden rod from the hard year-pressed mind ?
Were reasons sown as thick as stars above,
'Tis love must see them, as the eye sees light :
Day is but Number to the darkened sight.

GEORGE ELIOT.

TO A BROOKLET.



DEEP unlovely brooklet, moaning slow
Through moorish fen in utter loneliness !
The partridge cowers beside thy loamy flow
In pulseful tremor, when with sudden press
The huntsman flusters through the rustled heather.
In March thy sallow-buds from vermeil shells
Break satin-tinted, downy as the feather
Of moss-chat, that among the purplish bells
Breasts into fresh new life her three unborn.
The plover hovers o'er thee, uttering clear
And mournful-strange his human cry forlorn.
While wearily, alone, and void of cheer,
Thou guid'st thy nameless waters from the fen,
To sleep unsunned in an untrampled glen.

DAVID GRAY.

THE LUGGIE.



FOR the days of sweet Mythology,
When dripping Naiads taught their streams to
glide!

When, 'mid the greenery, one would oftentimes spy
An Oread tripping with her face aside.

The dismal realms of Dis by Virgil sung,
Whose shade led Dante, in his virtue bold,

All the sad grief and agony among,
O'er Acheron, that mournful river old,

Ev'n to the Stygian tide of purple gloom!

Pan in the forest making melody!

And far away where hoariest billows boom,
Old Neptune's steeds with snorting nostrils high?

These were the ancient days of sunny song;

Their memory yet how dear to the poetic throng.

DAVID GRAY.

SUNSET.



DAY—like a conqueror marching to his rest,
The warfare finished and the victory won,
And all the pageant of his triumph done—
Seeks his resplendent chamber in the West :
Yon clouds, like pursuivants and heralds drest
In gorgeous blazonry, troop slowly on,
Bearing abroad the banners of the sun
That proudly stream o'er many a warrior's crest.
In the azure field a solitary star
Lifts its pale signal, and the glorious train
Of errant sunbeams, straggling from afar,
Reform their glittering ranks, and join again
Their father Phœbus in his golden car,
Whose panting steeds have snuffed the western main.

GEORGE MORINE.




La brevità del sonetto non comporta che una sola parola sia vana, ed il vero subietto e materia del sonetto debbe essere qualche acuta e gentile sentenza, narrata attamente, ed in pochi versi ristretta, e fuggendo la oscurità e durezza.

Comment. di Lor. de Med. sopra i suoi sonetti.



Notes.

 HE two sonneteers that preceded Spenser, namely, Sir Thomas Wyatt and the Earl of Surrey, are not included in the foregoing selection, as their sonnets are not such as would please, or interest, the large majority of modern readers. To Wyatt, however, must be attributed the honour of having written the first English Sonnet, for, as Mr. Deshler points out in his interesting *Afternoons with the Poets*, many of his sonnets are said to have been addressed to Anne Boleyn before her connection with Henry the Eighth, and must therefore have been written when the Earl of Surrey was not more than fifteen years of age. The following, in which the poet 'Relinquisheth the Pursuit,' was probably composed about the time of that lady's marriage to

the King, and will be esteemed by poetic antiquarians as being the work of the earliest English sonneteer :—

Whoso list to hunt? I know where is a hind !
 But as for me, alas ! I may no more,
 The vain travail hath wearied me so sore ;
 I am of them that furthest come behind.
 Yet may I by no means my wearied mind
 Draw from the deer ; but as she fleeth afore,
 Fainting I follow : I leave off, therefore,
 Since in a net I seek to hold the wight.
 Who list her hunt, I put him out of doubt,—
 As well as I, may spend his time in vain !
 And graven with diamonds in letters plain,
 There is written her fair neck round about,—
 “ Noli me tangere ; for Cæsar’s I am,
 And wild for to hold, though I seem tame.”

This is a crude and faulty composition, and those by the Earl of Surrey, his friend and contemporary, are by no means perfect, although the latter is one of the poets who have been honoured with the title of “The English Petrarch.” The sonnet on *Sardanapalus* is perhaps his best, and is here given as a fair example of his power of versification :—

The Assyrian King, in peace, with foul desire
 And filthy lusts that stained his regal heart :

In war, that should set princely hearts on fire,
Did yield, vanquished for want of martial art.
The dint of swords from kisses seem'd strange,
And harder than his lady's side his targe ;
From glutton feasts to soldier's fare a change :
His helmet far above a garland's charge :
Who scarce the name of manhood did retain,
Drench'd in sloth and womanish delight,
Feeble of spirit, impatient of pain,
When he had lost his honour and his right,
(Proud time of wealth, in storms appalled with dread,)
Murdered himself, to show some manful deed.

It required no extraordinary perception to discover whose head this little cap was intended to fit, and one is scarcely surprised to find that the King afterwards thought proper, under some pretext or other, to order Surrey's execution. His Majesty was himself somewhat of a sonneteer, for Warton in his *History of English Poetry* states, "I have been told that the late Lord Eglintoun had a genuine book of manuscript sonnets written by King Henry the Eighth." He was also skilled in musical composition, and Erasmus attests that he composed some church services. As regards sonnet-writing, however, he is not the only sovereign we have had that has indulged in the composition of this form of verse, as James the First has

left us more than one example of his poetic genius, and his sonnet in honour of Sir Philip Sidney is not entirely without merit.

Page 1. *Easter Morning* and *Willing Bondage* are the gems of Spenser's *Amoretti*; they may justly be classed with those sonnets that are of the very highest excellence.

Page 10. Constable, who was a Roman Catholic and probably a member of the Yorkshire family of that name, was inferior as a poet to several of his contemporaries, but the praise given to him by Warton in the following criticism is not excessive, or undeserved:—"It would not be at all difficult to select some very favourable and pleasing specimens of Constable's skill in versification. If he had not in any high degree the true genius of poetry, at least, he may be said to have possessed a large share of poetical taste and enthusiasm, and while he steered clear of two cardinal vices of the age, coarseness and insipidity, to have produced a considerable number of sonnets of uncommon elegance and even beauty."—Perhaps the one entitled *Favour*, which has been omitted from previous sonnet-anthologies, is nevertheless in some respects the most pleasing of his compositions, although Mr. Minto has

rightly described that on page 11 as "the most exquisite of his sonnets for sweet colour and winning fancy."

Page 15. "There is, after all, nothing more remarkable or fascinating in English poetry than these personal revelations of the mind of our greatest poet. We read them again and again, and find each time some new proof of his almost superhuman insight into human nature; of his unrivalled mastery over all the tones of love."—F. T. PALGRAVE.

"The student of Shakspeare is drawn to the sonnets not alone by their ardour and depth of feeling, their fertility and condensation of thought, their exquisite felicities of phrase, and their frequent beauty of rhythmical movement, but in a peculiar degree by the possibility that here, if nowhere else, the greatest of English poets may—as Wordsworth puts it—have unlocked his heart."—E. DOWDEN.

These two paragraphs clearly represent the almost unanimous opinion of the present generation respecting Shakespeare's sonnets, and one reads with astonishment the wondrous criticism of George Steevens to the effect that Thomas Watson was "a more elegant sonneteer than

Shakespeare." Watson was a contemporary of the great dramatist, and the following may be given as a rather favourable specimen of his work :—

I saw the object of my pining thought
Within a garden of sweet Nature's placing ;
Wherein an arbour artificial wrought,
By workman's wondrous skill the garden gracing,
Did boast his glory, glory far renowned,
For in his shady boughs my mistress slept ;
And with a garland of his branches crowned,
Her dainty forehead from the Sun he kept
Imperious Love upon her eyelids tending,
Playing his wanton sports at every beck,
And into every finest limb descending,
From eyes to lips, from lips to ivory neck ;
And every limb supplied, and t' every part
Had free access, but durst not touch her heart.

Page 28. Nothing could be more charming, or sweeter-toned, than this sonnet on *Content*, and the one entitled *The Talent* is but little inferior. It is surprising to find both Constable and Barnes omitted from Leigh Hunt's *Book of the Sonnet*,—while Mr. John Dennis, in the Notes to his selection, states that he "has been unable to find one sonnet, out of the large number written by Barnes, that is adapted to his collection." If, as Dr. Grosart

states, *Ah, Sweet Content* might for its "sweet, soft simplicity," have formed part of the *Arcadia*,—the quaint solemn beauty of *The Talent* might have added another leaf to the wreaths that encircle the brows of Donne and George Herbert. It may be mentioned that Barnes was born in the county of York about the year 1568, and was the younger son of Dr. Barnes, Bishop of Durham: he was educated at Brasenose College, Oxford, and subsequently accompanied the Earl of Essex into France. Those subscribers who have the good fortune of possessing copies of Dr. Grosart's excellent reprint of Barnes' poems are much to be congratulated.

Page 31. Drummond of Hawthornden, has been designated, and rightly, "the Scottish Petrarch": with the exception of Shakespeare he is the most important sonneteer before Milton, and his compositions are both melodious and picturesque. One of the most remarkable of his sonnets is that on *Mary Magdalen*, which for striking and bold originality, for freshness of thought and expression, for delicious imagery and tender pathos, may compare favourably with our best English sonnets. It should be mentioned that his well-known sonnet beginning

"Alexis, here she stayed," is addressed to William Alexander, Earl of Stirling, who was himself a poet, and has the honour (so far as is known) of having written the first *Dialogue* sonnet in English, which is here given for that reason :—

A.

What art thou, in such sort that wail'st thy fall,
And comes surcharged with an excessive grief?

H.

A woeful wretch, that comes to crave relief,
And was *his* heart that now hath none at all.

A.

Why dost thou thus to me unfold thy state,
As if with thy mishaps I would embroil me?

H.

Because the love I bare to you did spoil me,
And was the instrument of my hard fate :—

A.

And dare so base a wretch so high aspire,
As for to plead for interest in my grace?
Go, get thee hence! Or if thou dost not cease
I vow to burn thee with a greater fire.

H.

Ah, ah,—this great unkindness stops my breath,
Since those that I love best procure my death.

1604.

Page 40. It may possibly be urged by those who are not conversant with the history of the Sonnet that these two examples by Robert Herrick are not sonnets at all. Such objectors may well be referred to a short paper by no less an authority than Samuel Taylor Coleridge, entitled "What is a Sonnet?" which they will find in Blackwood's "Edinburgh Magazine," for June, 1832. The form used by Herrick is as legitimate as that in which Shakespeare's sonnets are written, and it is that adopted by Thomas Carew in his sonnet *Love's Force*, by Edmund Waller, by Cotton, and more especially by William Habington, the most productive sonneteer of Herrick's contemporaries, whose well-known collection of poems, *Castara*, is mainly composed of sonnets written in this form. The following may be quoted as a representative example of Habington's style :—

Where sleeps the north-wind when the south inspires
Life in the spring, and gathers into quires
The scattered nightingales ; whose subtle cars
Heard first the harmonious language of the spheres ;
Whence hath the stone magnetic force to allure
The enamoured iron ; from a seed impure
Or natural did first the mandrake grow ;
What power i' th' ocean makes it ebb and flow ;

What strange materials is the azure sky
 Compacted of ; of what its brightest eye
 The ever-flaming sun ; what people are
 In the unknown world ; what worlds in every star ;
 Let envious fancies at this secret rove ;
 Castara, what we know we'll practice, love.

Another sonnet, also addressed to Castara, begins :—

By those chaste lamps which yield a silent light
 To the cold urns of virgins ; by that night
 Which guilty of no crime, doth only hear
 The vows of recluse nuns and the anthrit's prayer ;—

and ends :—

Thus my bright Muse in a new orb shall move,
 And even teach religion how to love.

These lines are of themselves, perhaps, sufficient to prove that Habington was a poet, and one gifted with a fairly keen perception of the beautiful, yet it is to be regretted that he did not compose his sonnets in the Guittonian form, instead of following the example of Shakespeare and adopting a loose nondescript variation. The earliest fourteen-lined poem of this description that we remember to have met with is Lyly's *Cupid and Campaspe*, which is described in Percy's "Reliques of Ancient Poetry," as an "exquisite sonnet." The latest

example that we know of is Mr. Edward Carpenter's *In Mortem F. D. Maurice*, which will be found at page 144 of *English Sonnets by Living Writers*.

Page 45. So much has been written about the sonnets of Milton that it is unnecessary to here eulogize these "soul-animating strains," as Wordsworth wisely designates them. The nearest approach that has been made to their severe grandeur is to be found in the Rev. Thomas Russell's *At Lemnos* (page 69) and few sonnets have received such high praise as this has had bestowed upon it by no less illustrious critics than Cary, Landor, Wordsworth, Southey, &c. It should be observed, however, that Coleridge seems to have preferred the sonnet given at page 70. But "nemo solus sapit!"

Page 60. When Bowles first published his sonnets he was accused of having imitated those of Charlotte Smith. In what high estimation this lady's work was still held nearly thirty years after her death, may be gathered from the fact that the late Rev. Alexander Dyce included no fewer than nine of her sonnets in his Selection, whereas he only gives one by Keats, and entirely omits those of Shelley and Byron.

Page 62. The whole of this sonnet shows a master's touch. As might be expected, the best sonnets have been written by the greatest poets—by Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, and Wordsworth,—and one is not surprised, therefore, to find that this by Burns is so good. The first four, and last two, lines are especially excellent.

Page 65. This—*Echo and Silence*—is one of the most famous of sonnets, and won no little praise for its author. Southey wrote respecting it, "I know not any poem, in any language, more beautifully imaginative." It is no doubt a highly finished and pleasing composition, and perhaps it were hypercritical to inquire why Echo is depicted as wearing a "robe of *dark-green* hue."

Page 87. The sonnets of S. T. Coleridge are far from being his best work, yet two of them are unquestionably good, namely, *Nature* and *Farewell to Love*. Perhaps the very worst of all his sonnets—and he wrote, if we remember rightly, about five-and-twenty—is that *To the Author of "The Robbers,"* of which Wordsworth very justly observed that it was "too much of a rant" for his taste.

Page 94. *To Innocence.* Lamb was probably not far wrong in thinking that this was the best of his "ewe

lambs," as he playfully called his sonnets. It is certainly far more pleasing than the one on *Work*, with its prosaic "dry drudgery at the desk's dead wood," and Satan's "*pensive* working-day 'mid rotatory burnings!" While it is less objectionable than his sonnet on *Leisure*, with its comic "white top of Methusalem,"—and the dull, unpoetic lines,

Which only works and business can redress—
Improbis Labor, which my spirits hath broke.

At the same time this, his favourite "ewe lamb," is not altogether without blemish, for Innocence does not become "awful" to ordinary men and women, even when it has, in a measure, departed from them; and most readers will probably agree in thinking that the finest and noblest of Lamb's sonnets,—and a very fine and noble sonnet it certainly is,—is that entitled *To a Friend*.

Page 96. There is a sonnet by Lord Herbert of Cherbury, containing a somewhat similar idea to that of Blanco White's, of which the last lines, referring to Night, are as follows:—

When thou dost reign,
The characters of fate shine in the skies,
And tell us what the heavens do ordain :

But when earth's common Light shines to our eyes
 Thou so retir'st thyself, that thy disdain
 All revelation unto man denies.

But there is another sonnet by Blanco White—he only wrote two—written some years before his *Night and Death*, the last three lines of which clearly foreshadow the subsequent composition, and which, as it has not been printed in any previous selection of sonnets, is here given :—

ON HEARING MYSELF FOR THE FIRST TIME
 CALLED AN OLD MAN. Æt. 50.

Ages have rolled within my breast, though yet
 Not nigh the bourn to fleeting man assigned :
 Yes : old—alas ! how spent the struggling mind
 Which at the noon of life is fain to set !
 My dawn and evening have so closely met
 That men the shades of night begin to find
 Darkening my brow ; and heedless, not unkind,
 Let the sad warning drop without regret.
 Gone Youth ! had I thus missed thee, nor a hope
 Were left of thy return beyond the tomb,
 I could curse life :—But glorious is the scope
 Of an immortal soul !—O Death ! thy gloom,
 Short, and already tinged with coming light,
 Is to the Christian but a summer's night !

Page 98. Horace Smith's sonnets appear to have been

overlooked :—the first eight lines of this, on *A Piping Faun*, have somewhat of the pleasing melody of Mr. Andrew Lang's *Bion*, which is given at page 35 of *English Sonnets by Living Writers*.

Page 109. Rev. Charles Strong was a friend of Dean Alford, and they were both Fellows of Wadham College, Oxford. The "Athenæum," in 1838, observes "Mr. (now Archbishop) Trench, if we recollect right, was highly praised by that modern guardian of sonnets, Christopher North, for his exquisite performance on the fourteen-stringed lute. To us, he seems to linger behind others of his compeers ; we need but name one, Mr. Strong, who far excels him."

Much as we admire these richly-coloured compositions by Charles Strong, we are not inclined to concur with the above criticism, for why compare Old Crome with Tintoretto, or Marcus Aurelius with Mr. Ruskin?

Page 124. The sonnets of Thomas Doubleday were published anonymously in 1818, and were honoured with an entire article in Blackwood's "Edinburgh Magazine," in 1822. The writer of the paper remarks :—"We have no hesitation in saying that, next to Wordsworth and

Bowles, this anonymous poet, for he *is* a poet, is the best writer of sonnets in our day." And this was written the year after the death of Keats !

Page 125. *Ozymandias* is the one sonnet by Shelley which has won for itself a niche beside such masterpieces as Milton's *Massacre in Piedmont*, Keats' *Chapman's Homer*, and Blanco White's *Night and Death*; and yet there is another sonnet by Shelley which is but little inferior to it, namely, that beginning, "Ye hasten to the dead ! What seek ye there ?".

Page 130. Dean Milman, the illustrious author of the "History of the Jews," and "History of Christianity," was the son of Sir Francis Milman, Bart., and was born in London in 1791. He was educated at Eton, and Brasenose College, Oxford, and obtained the Newdigate Prize in 1812, the subject of the poem being the Apollo Belvidere. His tragedy of *Fazio* was produced at Drury Lane on February 5, 1818, and afterwards in America, the acting of Miss Fanny Kemble contributing to its success. Other plays and poems followed this in rapid succession, but it is as a historian, and as a good, wise, and much beloved man, rather than as a poet, that Milman will descend

to posterity. He belonged to the Broad or liberal section of the Church, and ranks with Archbishop Whately, F. D. Maurice, Charles Kingsley, and the late Dean Stanley as leaders of that school.

Page 160. The sonnets of Hood scarcely appear to have received the recognition that they deserve. They have a strength of thought, and clearness of expression that should insure them a higher rank than they have yet been permitted to take. That on page 160 is indeed almost unequalled for solemn, tender pathos.

Page 169. Time and Twilight. This sonnet is, we believe, highly esteemed by the Laureate. Perhaps of all his brother's sonnets *The Quiet Tide near Ardrossan*, and *The Lattice at Sunrise*, will be most admired by cultured judges, but amongst ordinary readers *Letty's Globe* will probably be the favourite.

Charles Turner's compositions are marked by a pleasant simplicity and beauty, and no one can deny either their originality, or the poetic genius with which they are inspired. But, as an old writer quaintly observes, "a good piece, the painters say, must have good muscling, as well as colouring and drapery," and there is, perhaps,

just a slight defect in this respect in some of his poems, though not in those quoted in this volume. The defect becomes more apparent if they are compared with sonnets like those by Mr. D. G. Rossetti, but it is only fair to add that even the sonnets of Shakespeare or Milton seem to lose somewhat of their grandeur when compared with Mr. Rossetti's *Refusal of Aid between Nations*, or his noble sonnet entitled *The Sun's Shame*.

Page 190. The author of this sonnet, *The British Oak*,—which Southey pronounced to be one of the best in the language—was born in humble life, and is, perhaps, not unworthy to be ranked with such poets as Clare and Bloomfield. The late Mr. Lower, in his *Worthies of Sussex*, stated, somewhat extravagantly, that *The Oak* had rarely been excelled in the whole round of English poetry. It is, however, chiefly remarkable as being the composition of a poor labouring man. We have to thank the Rev. Thomas Agar Holland, who was personally acquainted with the author, for kindly calling our attention to it.

Page 202. Solitude. This sonnet, quoted in the "Athenæum" for 1842, has not been included in pre-

vious sonnet-anthologies ; it is, however, one which will bear comparison with the best, and has somewhat of the calm serenity of Lord Hanmer's *Pine Woods*. (See page 24 of *English Sonnets by Living Writers*.) It is taken from his *Rhymes and Roundelays*, published in 1841. Miss Mitford, in her *Recollections of a Literary Life* writes : "Mr. Noel resides in a beautiful place in that beautiful neighbourhood (Taplow), leading the life of an accomplished but somewhat secluded country gentleman ;—a most enviable life, and one well adapted to the observation of nature and to the production of poetry, but by no means so well calculated to make a volume of poems extensively known."

There is a quaint and striking poem by Noel entitled *The Pauper's Drive* which is perhaps the most popular of his compositions, and which is included in Mr. Thomas Solly's *Coronal of English Verse*.

Page 211. Brother and Sister. These two Shakespearian quatorzains are fairly representative of George Eliot's surpassing genius, and her deep insight into human nature and the eternal forces from which it springs.

Page 213. A Disappointment. This is said to have

been the author's sole composition in verse. It is a poem that lingers pleasantly in the memory : indeed, it is a dainty creation of a sweet and delicate beauty, and, in the words of the Portuguese aphorism, *'tis shut with a golden key*. It has been previously published by 'Proteus' amongst his own very remarkable sonnets.

Page 216. George Morine died at the town of Doncaster in 1872, aged sixty-three. His poems were printed for private circulation only. We have to thank the Rev. R. Wilton for bringing them to our notice.

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